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A memoir of the Christian
labors

A

MEMOIR

OF THE

CHRISTIAN LABORS,

Pastoral and Philanthropic,

OF

THOMAS CHALMERS, D. D. LL.D.

BY

FRANCIS WAYLAND.

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PREFACE.

THE "Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Dr. Chalmers, by his Son-in-law, Dr. Hanna," have been for several years in the possession of the Christian public. The work is exceedingly well written, and presents as complete a view of the character and labors of its illustrious subject as could be desired. In order, however, to accomplish his object, Dr. Hanna was obliged to present in detail a large amount of matter, relating particularly to Scotland, and of no special interest in this country; so that the work is extended to four volumes. This fact has, we fear, in some measure limited the number of its readers.

Besides this, I apprehend that Dr. Chalmers generally appears before us as the author of the Astronomical Sermons, of the Evidences of Christianity, of one of the Bridgwater Treatises, and of many works on Political Economy, and probably as one of the most celebrated pulpit orators of his age. That this view is a true

one there is no doubt, but it is not all the truth. There is another phase of his character, which is in danger of fading out of view. He was a devout and self-sacrificing Christian, a most laborious and successful pastor, an humble and indefatigable visitor among the poor and degraded, and his whole life was deliberately consecrated to the work of sending the gospel, with its life-giving power, to every family of the neglected masses of his countrymen. These traits of his character are, we think, not sufficiently known, or, if known, they do not press themselves upon the public with the power of a most remarkable example.

Having recently had occasion to recur to the Life of Dr. Chalmers, a passage or two so interested me that I read the whole work for the second time. It seemed to me that if this particular aspect of his character could be presented by itself, with the single object of exhibiting the parochial and philanthropic labors of this excellent man, his modes of doing good, and the general principles by which all his efforts were directed, something might be done for the cause of religion and benevolence. I immediately undertook the work. At first I intended no more than to prepare a pamphlet, but the subject grew under my hands, and the result has been the following little volume.

In the preparation of the work, I observed that a large part of the matter adapted to my purpose was narrative, and much of it statistical; the events were frequently surprising, and the statistics quite unprecedented. It seemed better, therefore, on all subjects concerning which any question might arise, to use the precise language of Dr. Chalmers's biographer, in whom all reliance may be placed. A large part of the work is thus presented in the words of Dr. Hanna. The passages are not commonly designated by quotation marks, it being supposed that this general acknowledgment would be sufficient.

Some time after the volume was completed, and was in fact already in the hands of the publishers, I received a copy of the "Life of Chalmers," published by the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society. I read it at once with care. The design of the author I found was quite different from my own. His work is properly an abridged Life of Chalmers, designed for general reading. The present little work is not strictly *a Life* of Dr. Chalmers, but, as has been already intimated, a memoir of that particular phase of his character which was dis-

played in his Parochial and Philanthropic labors, and is designed specially to aid, by his precepts, example, and general principles of action, both ministers and private Christians, who are, with him, laboring to promote the best interests of man. With designs so different, I hope the books will not appear as rivals, but as co-workers in the cause of Christ, and be useful to the persons for whose benefit they are each specially intended.

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MEMOIR.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY LIFE, UNTIL HIS SETTLEMENT AT KILMANY.

THE Reverend Thomas Chalmers was born in Anstruther, in Fifeshire, March 17, 1780. His parents were members of the established church of Scotland, persons of great worth and of earnest and consistent piety. Their household was preëminently Christian, and their children were brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

In the boyhood of Dr. Chalmers, there seems to have been no unusual intellectual development. He easily accomplished his tasks, but he did it only from necessity. At first he did not turn naturally to study, but gave himself rather to youthful sports, in which he greatly excelled. He was more distinguished for buoyant animal spirits, love of adventure, inflexible earnestness of purpose, united with great good temper, quickness

of wit, and the power of influencing his fellows, than for love of books and steadfast intellectual improvement. In 1791, not yet twelve years of age, he entered the college of St. Andrews. He was poorly prepared, and took but little pains to remedy his deficiencies. He was young, boyish, and idle, caring more for foot-ball, golf, and hand-ball, than for the prelections of his professors. He was enthusiastic, persevering in everything that he undertook, giving his whole mind to it; and was known and beloved for the strictest integrity and the warmest affections. Thus, though he did not learn much from books, he was in fact cultivating those elements of character, which, when directed, in subsequent life, to other objects, laid the foundation of his future eminence.

In the third session at college, his intellect began to develop itself. He came under the instruction of some eminent teachers, especially of Dr. James Brown, through whose influence he became deeply interested in study. His preference was decidedly for the mathematics. Young Chalmers became excited and absorbed. Pure geometry specially attracted him. With the higher powers of the modern analysis he afterwards became familiarly acquainted; and he ever afterwards considered this species of study one of the best instruments of intellectual training. As he proceeded, he took a deep interest in the various branches of

political science, and formed those habits of generalization which he displayed in so uncommon a degree whenever he was called on to apply general principles to any of the interests of humanity.

In 1795, in the sixteenth year of his age, he was enrolled as a student of divinity. During most of the time, he paid small attention to theology, being wholly absorbed in the study of mathematics. Towards the latter part of his course, however, he read with great care, "Edwards on the Will." He was convinced by the author's reasoning, and, what is worthy of special notice, was led by this work to entertain lofty and overwhelming views of the character of God, which, for a time, filled him with rapture and admiration. It was some time before these elevated views subsided.

He had, until this time, almost wholly neglected the study of English Composition. Indeed, during his first residence in St. Andrews, his letters are said to have abounded in grammatical blunders. This deficiency he set himself about in earnest to correct. In less than two years his improvement was so great that he had formed that style which distinguished him through life. He became able, with entire facility, even in the midst of interruptions, to pour forth upon paper, his inmost thoughts, adorned with all the beauty of profuse illustration, and burning with the fervor of his intense emotion. His progress in this department

was much accelerated by constant practice in the debating societies of which he became a member.

Upon leaving the University, he spent a year as a tutor in a private family. At the close of this engagement he applied for a license to the Presbytery of St. Andrews. His age did not entitle him to admission; but, by special favor, as "a lad of pregnant parts," he was licensed as a preacher of the gospel on the 31st of July, 1799, in the nineteenth year of his age.

The two ensuing winters were spent in Edinburgh, where he supported himself by teaching mathematics; devoting the remainder of his time to the pursuit of his favorite studies. He also enlarged his field of knowledge by attending diligently the courses in chemistry, and Natural and Intellectual philosophy. At the close of this period of study he became the assistant minister of Cavers. From this place, after between one and two years, he removed to Kilmany. He was ordained by the Presbytery of Cupar, as minister of this parish, on the twelfth day of May, 1803, in the twenty-third year of his age.

CHAPTER II.

MINISTRY AT KILMANY.

IT was understood, when Dr. Chalmers was settled at Kilmany, that he should be at liberty to spend a portion of his time as a teacher in the University of St. Andrews. He was therefore appointed as assistant to the professor of mathematics in that institution. This situation he held for about two years, until, for some unknown reason, he was dismissed by the professor. Stung by what appeared to be an act of discourtesy and injustice, he determined to open a course of private lectures on mathematics, to which he afterwards added a course on chemistry. Though at first opposed by the officers of the University, his lectures were fully attended. The opposition gradually subsided, and was replaced by feelings of kindness and respect. He had thus the opportunity, which he most desired, of proving that his dismissal was owing neither to deficiency in science, nor unworthiness of character.

These labors at St. Andrews occupied altogether the greater part of his time. It was his practice, as long as they continued, to leave Kil-

many on Monday and return on Saturday. Thus five days in the week were devoted to science, and two to the labors of the ministry. He believed that these two days in the week were sufficient for the discharge of all his parochial duties. It happened that about this time a question arose in the General Assembly respecting this union of other duties with those of the ministry. It was by many contended that the two obligations were incompatible, and that he who assumed the care of souls had no right to embarrass himself with any other engagement. Into this discussion Dr. Chalmers entered with characteristic zeal. He published a pamphlet on the subject, in which he clearly exhibits his views of the duties of the ministry. That these views may not be misrepresented we extract from the pamphlet the following sentence: "The author of this pamphlet can assert, from what to him is the highest authority, — the authority of his own experience, — that, after the satisfactory discharge of his parish duties, a minister may enjoy five days in the week of uninterrupted leisure for the prosecution of any science in which his tastes may dispose him to engage." He performed all the duties of his office which at that time were commonly required of a minister. He inculcated principally civil, social, and moral duties, with the hope that thus he might at least witness a reformation in the members of his parish. They

considered him an earnest preacher, frequently too abstract for them to understand, but yet one whose undissembled kindness of heart rendered him unusually acceptable. At the same time he was not unwilling to express his dislike of the peculiar doctrines of the gospel, and specially he believed the doctrines of the atonement and of salvation by Christ, nothing better than the dream of fanaticism. One day, bending over the pulpit, and putting on the books named the strong emphasis of dislike, he said, "Many books are favorites with you, which, I am sorry to say, are no favorites of mine. When you are reading Newton's Sermons, and Baxter's "Saint's Rest," and Doddridge's "Rise and Progress," where do Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John go to?" As though the readers of these books which he disliked, were not also the most devout students of the Bible! It is interesting to observe that, soon after uttering these words, he was called upon to attend the death-bed of his brother; and at the request of the latter, read to him portions of these very works. His brother died in sweet submission to the holy will of God, and with a satisfactory hope of mercy in Christ.

When his engagements at St. Andrews terminated, he soon entered on the labors of authorship. He published a volume entitled "An Inquiry into the Extent and Stability of the National Resour-

ces." He became a contributor to the *Edinburgh Encyclopedia*, for which he wrote several valuable articles; but especially the article on Christianity, which soon brought him into very favorable notice.

In the midst of these labors he was shocked to hear of the sudden death of one of his uncles; and shortly after was himself seized with a severe illness, which almost proved fatal. For weeks he was greatly prostrated, though his mind remained unclouded and vigorous. The sudden death of his uncle and his own nearness to the grave had upon him a great and solemn effect. "My confinement," said he, "has fixed on my heart a very strong impression of the insignificance of time, an impression which I trust will not abandon me, though I again reach the heyday of health and vigor. Strip human life of its connections with a higher scene of existence, and it is the illusion of an instant, an unmeaning farce, a series of visions and prospects and convulsive efforts, which terminate in nothing. I have been reading "Pascal's Thoughts on Religion." You know his history: a man of the richest endowments, and whose youth was signalized by his profound and original speculations in mathematical science, but who could stop short in the career of discovery, who could resign all the splendors of literary reputation, who could renounce, without a sigh, all the distinctions

that are conferred upon genius, and resolve to devote every talent and every hour to the defence and illustration of the gospel. This is superior to all Greek and all Roman fame."

Thus the Spirit of God commenced his work by teaching him the utter worthlessness of literary reputation, the idol to which he had thus far yielded his heart-felt adoration. His mind naturally turned towards those objects which alone possess real and permanent importance. The impression now made never vanished from his thoughts. It grew deeper and deeper, until the full light of the gospel burst upon his soul.

The deaths which had occurred in his family, and his own protracted and alarming illness, had produced on Dr. Chalmers a decided impression. He saw at once the vanity of the objects which he had been pursuing with so great eagerness, and also the unspeakable importance of a preparation for eternity. He could discover in himself nothing which could enable him to appear with confidence before a holy God. He saw that he had neglected the things unseen and eternal. The clear, unchallengeable right belonged to God, over the full affection of his heart, the unremitting service of his life; but no such affection had been entertained, and it had been but seldom that a distinct regard for the will of God had given birth or direction to any movement of his past

history. He felt that the Creator's claims over him had been particularly disallowed and dishonored during his whole life. The superficial faith of former years could not satisfy him, could not stand the scrutiny of a sick-room, it could not bear to be confronted with death; for, surely, if man have a God to serve, and an eternity beyond death to provide for, toward that God a supreme and abiding sense of obligation should be cherished, and to the providing for that eternity the efforts of a whole lifetime should be consecrated. Convinced of his error, he resolved upon a change.

Remembering that this fleeting pilgrimage was a scene of trial, a place of spiritual probation, he resolved that he would dedicate himself to the service of God, and live with the high aim and purpose of one who was in training for eternity. Every thought of his heart, every word of his mouth, every action of his life, he would henceforth strive to regulate under a high, presiding sense of his responsibility to God. With all the ardor of a nature which never could do anything by halves, with all the fervor of an enthusiasm which had at length found an object worthy of its whole energies at their highest pitch of effort, he gave himself to the great work of setting himself right with God. This resolution, however, did not originate in any change in his speculative belief induced by his studies, either

of the contents or the credentials of the Bible. This attempt to keep the whole law of God discovered to him the pervading, defiling element of ungodliness, and gave him other notions of human depravity than those which he had previously entertained. With this altered view of human sinfulness, there came also an altered view of the atonement. He was prepared to recognize in the death of Christ a true and proper sacrifice for sin. Still, while looking to that death for the removal of past sins, he believed that it lay wholly with himself, after he had been forgiven, to approve himself to God, to win the divine favor, and to work out the title to an heavenly inheritance.

From a journal kept during the following year, we cannot but perceive that Dr. Chalmers was most earnestly engaged in an honest effort to keep the whole law of God, and by so doing to recommend himself to an offended Judge. Everywhere we perceive his consciousness of the failure of his efforts, and his conviction of the innate sinfulness of man. We cannot but admire the earnestness of his endeavor, his increased understanding of the purity of the law of God, and his faithful dealing with his own conscience. He says of himself, referring to this time, "I was, in fact, a practical deist, excepting in a kind of tenderness for some tenets, and a reversionary out-look for final happiness."

At the close of the year, just after the death of one of his sisters, he took up and read with much attention "Wilberforce's Practical View." He was particularly struck with the following passage: "We are loudly called upon," said Mr. W., "*to examine well our foundations.* If anything be unsound or hollow, the superstructure could not be safe though its exterior were less suspicious. Let the question be asked, and let the answer be returned with all the consideration and solemnity which such a question justly demands, whether, in the grand concern of all, the means of a sinner's acceptance with God, there be not reason to apprehend that nominal Christians too generally entertain very superficial and confused, if not highly dangerous notions." Again he found his own condition strikingly delineated in the following words: "There are, it is to be apprehended, not a few, who having thought little, or scarcely at all, about religion, have become at length in some degree impressed with a sense of its infinite importance. A fit of sickness, perhaps, the loss of a friend or much-loved relative, or some other stroke of adverse fortune, damps their spirits to all human things, and turns them to seek for some more stable foundation of happiness than this world can afford. Looking unto themselves ever so little, they become sensible that they must have offended God. They resolve accord-

ingly to set about the work of reformation. Again and again they resolve, again and again they break their resolutions. All their endeavors are foiled, and they become more and more convinced of their own moral weakness, and of the strength of their inherent corruption. These men are pursuing the right object, but they mistake the path in which it is to be obtained. The path in which they are now treading is not that which the gospel has provided for conducting them to true holiness; nor will they find in it any solid peace. The holy Scriptures call upon those who are in the circumstances now stated to lay afresh the whole foundation of their religion. The nature of that holiness which the true Christian seeks to possess is no other than the restoration of the image of God to his own soul; and as to the manner of acquiring it, — disclaiming with indignation every idea of attaining it by his own strength, — he rests altogether on the operation of God's Holy Spirit, which is promised to all who cordially obey the gospel. He knows, therefore, that this holiness is not to *precede* his reconciliation with God and be its cause, but to follow and be its effect; that, in short, it is by faith in Christ only that he is to be justified in the sight of God."

The reading of Wilberforce's View was the means of special benefit to Dr. Chalmers. He was thus taught that we are sinful, helpless and

undone; that salvation by our own efforts is impossible, and that the attempt to work out a righteousness by ourselves is absurd. He saw that our pardon must come alone from the atonement of Him who loved us and gave himself for us, and that this pardon is offered to all who believe. He was led to see that, believing in Christ, a new spirit is given to us, so that with the whole heart we serve him from love; that what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin (as an offering for sin), condemned sin in the flesh, — that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. The good news thus offered to him he embraced with his whole soul. As a helpless, condemned sinner, renouncing all merit in the sight of God, and justly exposed to the condemnation of the law, he cast himself on Christ alone for pardon, he yielded up his whole soul to be governed alone by his Holy Spirit; and clothed in the righteousness of Christ, he felt that he could approach into the presence of immaculate purity, and claim the privilege of the sons of God. For "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoso believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." His whole life was henceforth governed by a new principle. Instead of laboring, by his own efforts, to

frame a righteousness which might recommend him to God, every power of his soul was employed in showing forth the praises of Him who had called him out of darkness into his marvellous light.

When he reflected on this subject, he saw that while he had striven with his whole heart to keep the law of God, it had still kept ahead of him, with a kind of over-matching superiority to all his efforts. His attempt to scale the heights of perfection, to quell the remonstrances of a challenging and yet unappeased commandment, was like the laborious ascent of him, who, having so wasted his strength that he can do no more, finds that some precipice remains to be overcome, some mountain brow that scorns his enterprise and threatens to overwhelm him. He repaired to the atonement to supply his deficiencies, and as the ground of his assurance that God would look upon him with a propitious eye; still an unappeasable disquietude hung heavy upon his heart, until at last he came to see that the Saviour had already and completely done for him, what with so much strenuousness, and with so little success, he had been striving to do for himself. He accepted with his whole heart the hand thus offered in the gospel; it was a personal, sincere seeking, and receiving from a personal Saviour, the free remission of all his sins, and power to become a son of God; and, like the woman in the gospel who

touched the hem of the Saviour's garment, he felt in himself that he was healed of his plague. In a letter written subsequently, he remarks, "I am most thoroughly of the opinion, and it is an opinion founded on experience, that on the system of Do this and live, no peace, and even no true and worthy obedience, can ever be attained. It is Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. When this belief enters the heart, joy and confidence enter along with it. We look to God in a new light, we see him as a reconciled Father. That love to him which terror scares away, reënters the heart, and, with a new principle and a new power, we become new creatures in Christ Jesus our Lord."

The change in the inmost principle of his soul is manifest from his journal and letters to his family. From them we select a few extracts: "A review of this day brings home to my conviction the futility of resting a man's hope of salvation upon mere obedience; that there is no confidence but in Christ; that the best security in fact for the performing of our duties is that faith that works by love, and which, under the blessing of God, will carry us to a height of moral excellence that a mere principle of duty, checked and disappointed as it must often be in its efforts after unattainable perfection, never could have reached."

Again: "May I every day feel a growing inter-

est in the covenant of grace, and let me evince in my own conduct that the doctrine of faith is a doctrine according to godliness."

Again: "Make me to feel a clear union with thee in Christ. May I taste the joys of thy chosen, and rejoice in the contemplation of that everlasting crown which is laid up for all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity and truth. May I be faithful in all the duties of my calling, and may the care of the souls of my people engross more of my time and prayers and strenuous exertion. All I ask is for the sake of Him to whom with Thee and the Holy Spirit I give all the praise and all the glory."

A few extracts from his correspondence with his family exhibit the same tone of mind: "I must say that I never had so close and satisfactory a view of the gospel salvation as when I have been led to contemplate it in the light of a simple offer on the one side, and a simple acceptance on the other. It is just saying to one and all of us, 'There is forgiveness through the blood of my Son; take it;' and whosoever believes the reality of the offer takes it. It is not in any shape the reward of your own services. It is the gift of God, through Christ Jesus our Lord. The Son of man was so lifted up that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Again: "That sanctification which out of Christ

none can reach, is only found in close union with him, and if we maintain what may be called the gospel attitude of mind, which is looking unto Jesus, we shall obtain of his spirit, we shall be changed into his image, we shall be strengthened for all duty."

Again: "The right way is to look to Jesus as lifted up for sin, and we have his authority for saying, that whosoever so looketh shall be saved; saved from sin in all its malignity, saved not merely from condemnation but its power; redeemed from its curse, and redeemed from its dominion; so that, by the operation of this remedy alone, we are washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of our Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God."

One more: "If I have any experience which I can speak clearly upon at all, it is that I am never more qualified for keeping the commandments than when in the fellowship of the Saviour and resting upon his righteousness; than when under the influence of a gospel hope, and looking upon the salvation of Christ as all a matter of grace and freeness."

From such a change in Dr. Chalmers's views of the salvation of the gospel, and from so solemn a view of the realities of eternity, it is natural to suppose that important practical results would follow. This was visible in many respects. His

tastes were greatly changed. The study of mathematics, upon which he had looked as his great field for literary distinction, he relinquished entirely. The books of which he had publicly spoken with scorn as the objects of his peculiar dislike, now became his chosen companions. He became deeply interested in Henry, Doddridge, Baxter, and authors of the same kind, and they became his select companions. It was, however, in the devout study of the Scriptures that this change especially manifested itself. His nearest neighbor, with whom he was on terms of easy familiarity, before the illness to which we have referred, said once to Dr. Chalmers, "I find you aye busy with one thing and another, but come when I may, I never find you at your studies for the Sabbath." "Oh, an hour or two on the Saturday evening is quite enough for that," was the minister's reply. But now a change had come, and John on entering the manse often found Dr. Chalmers poring eagerly over the pages of the Bible. The difference was too striking to escape notice; and with the freedom given him he said, "I never come in now, sir, but I find you aye at your Bible." "All too little, John! all too little!" was the significant reply.

This change in his religious sentiments produced, however, more noticeable results in the discharge of his duties as a minister of the gospel.

Parochial duties pressed lightly on him during the first years of his settlement at Kilmany. If, as he declared before the General Assembly, he expended as much effort on the religious improvement of his people as any minister within the bounds of the Presbytery, the standards to which he appealed must have been lamentably low. The sick and dying among his parishioners even then he did not neglect. He made kind inquiries, exhibited a tender sympathy, and extended needful aid; but no solicitude was manifested as to their religious condition; no references occurred, in visiting them, to their prospects for eternity; and it was only when specially requested to do so that he engaged in prayer. Two or three weeks were annually devoted to the visitation of his parish. This, however, was so rapidly conducted that he scarcely did more than hurriedly enter a dwelling, to summon its inmates to a short address given in some neighboring apartment, and confined generally to one or other of the more ordinary moralities of domestic life. With the general body of his parishioners he had little intercourse. He spent but little time upon his pulpit preparations. "I have known him," said a friend, "not to begin them until Sabbath morning." His sermons were in general very short; but they were written with fervor and delivered with much animation. He never used so ardent and significant an elocution

as in his extempore expostulations upon stealing or lying or backbiting.

Upon the whole, however, until the period of his long illness at Fincraigs, of which we have spoken as one of the occasions of his change of religious views, Dr. Chalmers' ministry was unpopular and ineffective. His church was but poorly attended, and his private ministrations followed only by trifling effects. But with the change, of which we have spoken, there came a total alteration in the discharge of all his parochial duties. The spiritual care and cultivation of his parish became the supreme object of his life. To break up the peace of the indifferent and secure, by exposing at once the guilt of their ungodliness and its fearful issue in a ruined eternity; to spread out an invitation wide as heaven's all-embracing love, to accept of eternal life in Jesus Christ; to plead with all, that instantly and heartily, with all good-will, and with full and unreserved submission, they should give themselves up in absolute and entire dedication to the Redeemer; these were the objects for which he was now seen to strive with such a severity of conviction as implied that he had one thing to do, and with such a concentration of forces as to idle spectators, looked like insanity. Most earnest entreaties that every sinner he spoke to should come to Christ just as he was, and bury all his

fears in the sufficiency of the great atonement, were presented in all possible forms, and delivered in all different kinds of tones and attitudes. "He would bend over the pulpit," said one of his old hearers, "and press us to take the gift as if he held it that moment in his hand, and would not be satisfied until every one of us had got possession of it. And often when the sermon was over and the psalm was sung, and he rose to pronounce the blessing, he would break out afresh with some new entreaty, unwilling to let us go until he had made one more effort to persuade us to accept of it."

As soon as he returned to Kilmany after his memorable sickness at Fincraigs, he first of all visited all the sick and dying and bereaved of his parish. His interest in this,as in every other part of his ministerial labor, grew with his own advancing light and love. During the years 1813 and 1814, the only two years of full ministerial labor at Kilmany, he made a few short-hand memoranda entitled, "Records of my Spiritual Intercourse with my People." They are occupied with notes of visits and conversations with the sick, the dying, and the impenitent; and teach us how deeply his soul was stirred with the solemn responsibility resting upon him, and how controlling was that love of souls which compelled him to preach the gospel to every creature.

He continued his practice of visiting his parish, but, instead of finishing this work in a fortnight, it occupied him the whole year. The visit on these occasions was not merely an agreeable recognition and a pleasant ceremony. It was improved by Dr. Chalmers as an occasion for earnest conversation on the subject of personal religion, with the members of the family, and of solemn exhortation to lay hold of the salvation offered in the gospel. "I have a very lively recollection," said Mr. R. Edie, "of the intense earnestness of his addresses on occasions of visitation in my father's house, when he would unconsciously move forward on his chair to the very margin of it, in his anxiety to impart to the family and servants the impression of eternal things that so filled his soul." It was in this manner that he carried the gospel to every family in his parish, like the apostle teaching publicly and from house to house, testifying repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

But this did not exhaust his efforts. In the autumn of 1813 he opened a class, in his own house, upon the Saturdays, for the religious instruction of the young. At first it was intended that it should meet monthly; the numbers, however, who presented themselves for instruction, and the ardor with which they entered upon the tasks imposed, induced him soon to hold the class every

fortnight, and then every week. At these meetings, he strove with great earnestness to impress the truths of religion on the minds of the class. In turn he was highly gratified by witnessing the whole youth of the parish, even from its remoter districts, coming forward with such willingness; and he repaid their readiness to receive instruction by making diligent preparation for communicating to them the knowledge of the truth, and fixing religious impression on their hearts. In no department of his ministerial labors did he take a deeper interest, and upon none, in proportion to the space which it covered, did he bestow more pains. It was only a year and a half that the class continued; and yet three years after his departure from Kilmany, he could say, "I met with a more satisfactory evidence of good done by a school which I taught at Kilmany, than by all I ever did there beside." A good encouragement this for the efforts of private Christians in this way.

Nor did these private labors interfere with his diligent preparation for the Sabbath. Instead of two or three hours which he formerly took for the work of preparation, a large part of every week was now devoted to the duty of studying devoutly how he best could bring the truth home to the hearts of his hearers. In a letter to his mother, he writes, "You may tell my father that I have at length come to his opinion, that the peculiar

business of his profession demands all the time, all the talents, and all the energy that any minister is possessed of." It was not, however, the effort to win or sustain a wide-spread popularity, it was not the straining after originality of thought or splendor of illustration, which gave to these discourses their peculiar form and character. They were, to a great extent, the spontaneous product of that new love and zeal which divine grace had implanted in his soul; the shape and texture of their eloquence springing from the action of that controlling motive, which concentrated all his powers upon one single and sublime accomplishment, the salvation of immortal souls.

It was not long before the whole aspect of the Sabbath congregations in Kilmany church was changed. The stupid wonder which used to sit on the countenances of the few villagers or farm-servants who attended divine service, was turned into a fixed, intelligent, and devout attention. It was not easy for the dullest to remain uninformed; for if the preacher sometimes soared too high for the best trained of his people to follow him, at other times, and much oftener, he put the matter of his message so as to force for it an entrance into the most sluggish understanding. The church became crowded. The feeling grew with the numbers who shared in it. The fame of these wonderful discourses spread through the

neighborhood, till at last there was not an adjacent parish which did not send its weekly contribution to his ministry. Persons from extreme distances in the county found themselves side by side, crowded into the same pew.

The effect produced upon the audience can best be exhibited by a single incident.

In the spring of 1812, he preached from the text, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Two young men heard this sermon, the one the son of a farmer in the parish, the other the son of one of the villagers. They met as the congregation dispersed. "Did you ever feel anything particular in the church to-day?" said Alexander Pattison to his acquaintance, Robert Edie, as they found themselves alone on the road. "I never," he continued, "felt myself to be a lost sinner until to-day, when I was listening to that sermon." "It is very strange," said his companion; "it was just so with me." They wandered into a plantation, where, hidden from sight, they engaged in mutual prayer. They both soon found peace in believing, and both became earnest and devout disciples of Christ.

But the most interesting account of the result of Dr. Chalmers' labors during this period is told by himself. Of its truthfulness there can be no doubt,

as it was addressed by himself to those who were themselves the subjects of the experiment to which he refers. It is from an address to the inhabitants of the parish of Kilmany, published in 1815. Though rather long for such a sketch as this, we hope it will obtain, as it certainly merits, a serious perusal.

"And here I can but record the effect of an actual, though undesigned, experiment which I prosecuted for upwards of twelve years among you. For the greater part of that time I could expatiate on the meanness of dishonesty, on the villany of falsehood, on the despicable evils of calumny; in a word, upon all those deformities of character which awaken the natural indignation of the human heart against the pests and disturbers of human society. Now, could I, upon the strength of these warm expostulations, have got a thief to give up his stealing, and the evil-speaker his censoriousness, and the liar his deviations from truth, I should have felt the repose of one who has gotten his ultimate object. It never occurred to me that all this might have been done, and yet the soul of every hearer have remained in full alienation from God; and that even could I have established in the bosom of one who stole, such a principle of abhorrence at the meanness of dishonesty that he was prevailed upon to steal no more, he might still have retained a heart as completely

unturned to God, and as totally unpossessed by a principle of love to him, as before. In a word, though I might have made him a more upright and honorable man, I might have left him as destitute of the essence of religious principle as ever. But the interesting fact is, that during the whole of that period, in which I made no attempt against the natural enmity of the mind to God; while I was inattentive to the way in which that enmity is dissolved, even by the free offer on the one hand and the believing acceptance on the other of the gospel salvation; while Christ, through whose blood the sinner, who by nature stands afar off, is brought near to the heavenly Lawgiver whom he has offended, was scarcely ever spoken of, or spoken of in such a way as stripped him of all the importance of his character and offices, — even at this time, I certainly did press the reformations of honor and truth and integrity among my people, but I never once heard of any such reformations having been effected among them. If there was anything brought about in this way, it was more than I ever got any account of. I am not sensible that all the vehemence with which I urged the virtues and the proprieties of social life, had the weight of a feather on the moral habits of my parishioners. And it was not till I got impressed by the utter alienation of the heart, in all its desires and affections, from God; it was not till rec-

onciliation to him became the distinct and pre-eminent object of my ministerial exertions; it was not till I took the scriptural way of laying the method of reconciliation before them; it was not till the free offer of forgiveness through the blood of Christ was urged upon their acceptance; the Holy Spirit, given through the channel of Christ's mediatorship to all who ask him, was set before them as the unceasing object of their dependence and their prayers; in one word, it was not till the contemplations of my people were turned to these great and essential elements in the business of a soul providing for its interests with God and the concerns of its eternity, that I ever heard of these subordinate reformations, which aforetime made the earnest and the zealous, but, I am afraid, at the same time, the ultimate object of my earlier ministrations. Ye servants, whose scrupulous fidelity has now attracted the notice, and drawn forth in my hearing a delightful testimony from your masters, what mischief ye would have done had your zeal for doctrines and sacraments been accompanied by the sloth and remissness, and what, in the prevailing tone of moral relaxation, is accounted the allowable purloining of your earlier days! But a sense of your heavenly Master's eye has brought another influence to bear upon you; and while you are thus striving to adorn the doctrine of your God and

Saviour in all things, you may, poor as you are, reclaim the great ones of the land to the acknowledgment of the faith. You have at least taught me, that to preach Christ, is the only effective way of preaching morality in all its branches; and out of your humble cottages have I gathered a lesson which I pray God I may be enabled to carry with all its simplicity into a wider theatre, and to bring with all the power of its subduing efficacy upon the vices of a more crowded population."

We will close this account of the ministry of Dr. Chalmers at Kilmany by the relation of an incident, which, though it occurred some twenty years later, is, in its subject, intimately related to the extract above.

About the year 1825 the subject of pluralities was brought before the General Assembly. Dr. Chalmers, of course, contended that the care of a parish was sufficiently arduous to occupy the *whole* of a minister's time, and that he should be allowed to combine with it no other calling. The debate was earnest and protracted. At the close of the second day a member on the opposite side read from, as he said, an anonymous pamphlet, a quotation in which the author asserted from what to him was the highest authority, — "the authority of his own experience, — that after the satisfactory discharge of his parish duties, a minister may enjoy five days in the week of uninterrupted leisure

for the prosecution of any science in which his tastes may dispose him to engage."

In an instant all eyes were turned toward Dr. Chalmers. The interposition of another speech gave him a brief period of recollection. At the close of the debate he spoke a few words amidst breathless silence. The speech was substantially as follows: —

"Sir: that pamphlet I now declare to have been a production of my own, published twenty years ago. I was indeed much surprised to hear it brought forward and quoted this evening; but since it has been brought forward in the face of this house, I can assure the gentleman that I feel grateful to him from the bottom of my heart for the opportunity which he has now afforded me of making a public recantation of the sentiments it contains. I now confess myself to have been guilty of a heinous crime, and I now stand a repentant culprit before the bar of this venerable Assembly.

"The circumstances attending the publication of my pamphlet were, shortly, as follows: As far back as twenty years ago, I was ambitious enough to aspire to be successor to Professor Playfair, in the mathematical chair of the University of Edinburgh. During the discussions that then took place, it was stated that no person could be found competent to discharge the duties of the mathemat-

ical chair, among the clergymen of the church of Scotland. I was at that time, sir, more devoted to mathematics than to the literature of my profession, and, feeling grieved and indignant at what I conceived an undue reflection on the abilities and education of our clergy, I came forward with that pamphlet to rescue them from what I deemed an unmerited reproach, by maintaining that a devoted and exclusive attention to the study of the mathematics was not dissonant to the proper habits of a clergyman. Alas, sir, so I thought in my ignorance and pride! I have now no reserve in saying that the sentiment was wrong, and in the utterance of it, I penned what was most outrageously wrong. Strangely blinded that I was! What, sir, is the object of mathematical science? Magnitude and the proportions of magnitude. But then, sir, I had forgotten two magnitudes. I thought not of the littleness of time, I recklessly thought not of the greatness of eternity."

For a moment or two after the last words were spoken a deathlike stillness reigned throughout the house. The power and pathos of the scene were overwhelming, and we shall search long in the lives of the most illustrious ere we find another instance in which the sentiment, the act, the utterance, each rose to the same level of sublimity, and stood so equally embodied in one impressive spectacle.

CHAPTER III.

DR. CHALMERS AT GLASGOW — REMARKABLE ELOQUENCE.

EARLY in the year 1815, Dr. Chalmers was chosen minister of the Tron Church in Glasgow, and in July of the same year he was regularly inducted into office. With many and severe regrets he left Kilmany, where he had been pastor twelve years; the place of his spiritual birth, where his usefulness as a minister of the gospel first developed itself, and where the fruits of his labors were everywhere apparent. The whole parish looked upon him as a personal friend as well as a spiritual instructor, and he fully reciprocated their affection. To the end of his life Kilmany seems to have been the home of his heart, to which he involuntarily turned when he was wearied with the labor and bustle of ordinary life.

He entered upon his settlement in Glasgow in his thirty-fifth year, with all his faculties in their highest condition of vigorous maturity. Much had been anticipated for him by his friends, but their anticipations were more than realized. In all his

public ministrations he displayed a power over the human heart such as they had never seen paralleled. He felt the importance of his position, and he resolved to occupy it to the uttermost. Glasgow was, as it were, taken by storm. His church was soon filled to the uttermost. Soon the house would not contain the throngs that pressed to hear him, and hundreds were obliged to go away every Sunday, who could by no means gain admission. Nor did this occur merely in one church, it was so wherever he preached. He spent a week in London about this time, during the May anniversaries. Wherever it was known that he was to officiate, the street was crowded in the vicinity of the church with thousands anxious to secure a seat. On one occasion he was unable to enter the door himself, and was obliged to get into the pulpit through a window which he scaled with no inconsiderable difficulty.

In fact God had endowed him, in a wonderful degree, with those elements which above all others lay at the foundation of eloquence. His love for humanity was intense. The woes of his brethren touched him as if they were his own, and the sight of innocence trampled in the dust by lawless and insolent power goaded him almost beyond endurance. He was capable of being thoroughly excited by his own conceptions, and every feeling of his soul found adequate utterance

in those wonderful tones of voice which carried his burning thoughts, not merely to the ear, but to the inmost soul of those whom he addressed. His love of nature amounted to a passion. He enjoyed with the keenest zest every scene on which his eyes rested, whether in sunshine or storm, whether in the vast or the minute, whether lowly or sublime; and every scene was daguerreotyped on his mind, thus furnishing him with matter for appropriate and exhaustless illustrations. To this was added vast copiousness of language, which, if seen on the written page, sometimes tended to diffuseness; yet when uttered by the living voice, and rendered vital by his wonderful modulation, it seemed merely to delay the progress of the thought, until every conception had time to sink with its full weight into the very soul of his auditors. Such gifts as these, bestowed in such abundance, would have placed any man at once in the first rank of orators. But it is to be remembered, that his whole soul was penetrated with the most solemn and affecting truths of Revelation. He saw in his hearers a company of men, sinners against God, surrendered to the cares and vices of the present world, at enmity with God, and at the present moment under the condemnation of his holy law. The Son of God had become incarnate to obey the law which we had broken, and to bear our sins in his own body

on the tree; and even now he was offering mercy to sinners for whom he had purchased pardon and peace with an offended God. He came before men as the messenger of that God, as the ambassador of that Saviour. With almost uncontrollable emotion, he proclaimed the love of God, and besought men to be reconciled to him. All the powers of the most wonderful eloquence here found an occasion for their fullest exercise. Whether he spoke to the profligates of Westport, the merchants of Glasgow, or the elite of London, he never failed to carry the audience with him in rapt admiration. In the General Assembly, in the sacred desk or on the platform, it was all the same,—thousands thronged to hear him; and at his voice the whole assembly was swayed, as when the trees of the forest are moved by a rushing, mighty wind.

I think it will not be uninteresting to recall a few instances of the impression which he produced upon hearers who were perfectly competent to form a correct judgment on this subject. For this purpose, I will transcribe a few of those reminiscences which seem to me most worthy of notice.

Dr. Chalmers preached his first sermon in Glasgow after his call to the Tron Church, and before he had been formally inaugurated as pastor. The public interest was intense. Among the hearers was Mr. Lockhart, afterwards son-in-law to Sir

Walter Scott, and editor of the *Quarterly Review*. From his description of the preacher, the following is an extract: —

"His voice is neither strong nor melodious; his gestures are neither easy nor graceful, but, on the contrary, extremely rude and awkward; his pronunciation is not only broadly national, but broadly provincial, distorting almost every word he utters into some barbarous novelty, which, had his hearers leisure to think of such things, might be productive of an effect at once ludicrous and offensive in the highest degree. But of a truth these are things which no listener can attend to while this great preacher stands before him, armed with all the weapons of the most commanding eloquence, and swaying all around him with its imperial rule. At first indeed there is nothing to make one suspect what riches are in store. He commences in a low, drawling key, which has not even the merit of being solemn, and advances from sentence to sentence, and from paragraph to paragraph, while you seek in vain to catch a single echo that gives promise of that which is to come. There is, on the contrary, an appearance of constraint upon him, that affects and distresses you. You are afraid that his breast is weak, and that even the slight effort he makes may be too much for it. But then with what tenfold richness does this dim preliminary curtain make the

glories of his eloquence shine forth, when the heated spirit at length shakes from it its chill confining fetters, and bursts out elate and rejoicing in the full splendor of its disimprisoned wings. I have heard many men deliver sermons far more uniform in elegance, both of conception and of style, but most unquestionably I have never heard, either in England or Scotland, or in any other country, any preacher whose eloquence is capable of producing an effect as strong and irresistible as his."

Dr. Chalmers, in the year 1816, took an active part in the proceedings of the General Assembly. After hearing one of his speeches, Mr. Jeffrey, the first critic of his time, remarked, "I know not what it is, but there is something remarkable about that man; it reminds me more of what one reads of the effect of the eloquence of Demosthenes, than anything I ever heard."

Shortly after he was appointed to preach before the Lord High Commissioner. Long before the hour of service, a multitude larger than any church could contain was gathered in front of the High Church, and when the doors were opened the rush was terrific. It was with the greatest difficulty that the Commissioner, the judges, and magistrates reached their allotted seats. During the service, the attention of the audience was so upon the stretch, that when the preacher made a

pause, at the conclusion of an argument, a sort of sigh, as if for breath, was perceptible through the house. At the end of a particular passage, says one who was present, there ran through the congregation a suppressed but perfectly audible murmur of applause, — an occurrence hitherto unprecedented in the course of the delivery of a sermon, but irresistible in order to relieve our highly excited feelings.

In the year 1816, the astronomical discourses were delivered at the Thursday lecture, a service sustained by the ministers of the established church in Glasgow. When Dr. Chalmers's turn occurred, it is said the spectacle that presented itself was remarkable. Long before the bell began to toll, a stream of people might have been seen pouring through the passages that led to the Tron Church. Across the street was the old reading-room, where all the Glasgow merchants met. As soon as the accustomed warning was given, out flowed the occupants of the coffee-room; the pages of the Herald and Courier were for a while forsaken, and, during two of the busiest hours of the day, the old reading-room wore a strange aspect of desolation. The busiest merchants of the city were wont upon these memorable days to leave their desks, and kind merchants allowed their clerks and apprentices to follow their example. Out of the very heart of the great tumult of business an hour or

two stood redeemed for the highest exercises of the Spirit. Nor did the interest of these discourses cease with their delivery. They were printed, and in ten weeks 6000 were sold, and within a year 20,000 were in circulation. Our wonder is increased by the knowledge of the manner in which some of these sermons were composed. On a journey, after the exhaustion of Sunday's labor, he writes, "I began my fourth astronomical sermon to-day." And in a small pocket-book, with borrowed pen and ink, in strange apartments, where he was liable every moment to interruption, that sermon was taken up and carried on to completion. At the manse of Balmerino, having a couple of hours to spare; at the manse of Kilmany, in the drawing-room, with all the excitement of meeting, after a year's absence, his old friends; at the manse of Logie, where by accident he found a vacant hour, paragraph after paragraph was penned of a composition, which bears upon it as much of the aspect of high and continuous elaboration, as almost any piece of writing in our language.

In May, 1817, he visited London, to deliver the annual sermon before the London Missionary Society. Although the service did not commence until eleven o'clock, at seven in the morning the chapel was crowded to excess. The effect on the audience was described as unprecedented. A gentleman who was present wrote thus concerning

it to his friends in Glasgow: "I write under the nervousness of having heard and witnessed the most astonishing display of human talent that perhaps ever commanded sight or hearing. Dr. Chalmers has just finished the discourse before the Missionary Society. All my expectations were overwhelmed in the triumph of it. Nothing from the Tron pulpit ever exceeded it, nor did he ever more arrest and wonder-work his auditors. I had a full view of the whole place. The *carrying forward of mind* was never so visible to me. A constant assent of the head from the whole people accompanied all his paragraphs, and the breathlessness of expectation permitted not the beating of a heart to agitate the stillness."

He preached for various charities several times during his visit to the metropolis, and everywhere with similar effect. Among his hearers were many of the most distinguished men of London. Mr. Wilberforce thus refers to him in his diary at this time: "All the world wild about Dr. Chalmers. He seems truly pious, simple, and unassuming. Monday, 25th. Off early with Canning, Huskinson, and Lord Binning to the Scotch Church, London-Wall, to hear Dr. Chalmers. Vast crowd! Robert Smith, Lords Elgin, Harrowby, etc. I was surprised to see how greatly Canning was affected. At times he was quite melted into tears. He is reported to have said, that, although at first

he felt uneasy in consequence of Dr. Chalmers's manner and accent, yet he had never been so arrested by any oratory. 'The tartan,' said he, 'beats us all.'"

The last sermon which he preached was perhaps the most impressive, as he dealt throughout on truths bearing directly on the individual salvation of his hearers. Wilberforce writes of it, "Chalmers most awful on the carnal and spiritual man." Says a writer in the Morning Chronicle, "Dr. Chalmers's sermon on the degeneracy of man was one of the finest specimens of eloquence that could possibly be delivered from the pulpit, and displayed the most profound knowledge of the human mind. The progress of vice, its fascinating allurements, and its tendency to the eternal ruin of its votaries, were depicted in the most glowing colors. The discourse was concluded by an animated and most powerful address to the vicious on the folly and absurdity of their conduct."

Nearly twenty years afterwards, he was invited to London to deliver a series of lectures on Church Establishments. He accepted the invitation, and the first lecture was delivered to a select audience in the Hanover Square Rooms, on Wednesday, the 25th of April. It was remarked by a leading journal, "From the first word that escaped the lips of the lecturer, till the concluding sentence

died away amid the acclamations of the audience, the vivid interest was sustained with a deep and unflagging intensity." At the second lecture the seats reserved for peers and members of Parliament were at an early hour crowded to overflow, and so difficult was it to pack the room aright, that for more than a quarter of an hour after the time fixed for opening, the lecturer could not proceed. The third lecture witnessed a still denser crowd, composed of a still higher grade, and manifesting a still higher enthusiasm. At the fourth and fifth lectures an American clergyman was present, who tells us, "The hour at which the lecture was to commence was two o'clock. I thought it necessary to be beforehand in order to procure a seat. When I arrived, I found the hall so perfectly crammed that at first it seemed impossible to gain admission; but by dint of perseverance I pushed my way onward through the dense crowd, till I had reached nearly the centre of the hall. Though the crowd was so great, it was very obvious that the assembly was made up principally of persons in the higher walks of life. Dukes, marquises, earls, viscounts, barons, baronets, bishops, and members of Parliament, were to be seen in every direction. After some considerable delay and impatient waiting, the great charmer made his entrance, and was welcomed with clappings and shouts of applause, that grew more and more

intense till the noise became almost deafening. The concluding lecture was attended by nine prelates of the Church of England. The tide that had been rising and swelling each succeeding day, now burst all bounds. Carried away by the impassioned utterance of the speaker, long ere the close of some of his finest passages was reached, the voice of the lecturer was drowned in applause, the audience rising from their seats, waving their hats above their heads, and breaking out into tumultuous approbation. Nothing could exceed the enthusiasm that prevailed in London. The great city seemed stirred to its very depths. The Doctor sat behind a small table while delivering his lectures, the hall in front being densely crowded with one of the most brilliant audiences that ever assembled in Great Britain. It was supposed that at least five hundred of those present were peers and members of the House of Commons. The sitting attitude of Dr. Chalmers seemed at first irreconcilable with much energy or effect. Such an anticipation was at once dispelled by the enthusiasm of the speaker, responded to if possible by the still more intense enthusiasm of the audience. Occasionally the effect was even greatly increased by the eloquent man springing unconsciously to his feet, and delivering with overwhelming power the more magnificent passages; a movement which once at least was imi-

tated by the entire audience, — when the words 'The king cannot, the king dare not,' were uttered in accents of prophetic vehemence, that must still ring in the ears of all who heard them, and were responded to by a whirlwind of enthusiasm which was probably never exceeded in the history of eloquence. Nothing was more striking, however, amidst all this excitement, than the childlike humility of the great man himself. All this flattery seemed to produce no effect whatever on him; his mind was entirely absorbed in his great object; and the same kind, playful, and truly Christian spirit, that so endeared him to us all, was everywhere apparent in his conduct."

We might give many other incidents illustrative of Dr. Chalmers's remarkable eloquence, but our limits forbid.

It will naturally be asked, What effect did this unprecedented popularity produce upon the mind of Dr. Chalmers? In answer to this question we would remark, that his journals everywhere exhibit the most earnest strivings of his soul after perfect victory over vanity and the love of human applause. All who knew him bear witness that he everywhere displayed in a remarkable degree those graces of simplicity, humility, and childlike benevolence which specially become a disciple of Christ. He was evidently more deeply moved at learning that his ministrations had been blessed

to the conversion of a soul, than by the rapturous applause elicited by the most successful of his public addresses. No man esteemed more truly the vanity of the praise of man. During his Glasgow ministry, while urging his Sabbath-school agency to increased activity in the home-walk of private benevolence, in which they could earn, if not a proud, at least a peaceful popularity, — the popularity of the heart, the only popularity that is worth aspiring after; the popularity that is won in the bosom of families and at the side of death-beds, — he added, "There is another, and a far-sounding popularity, which is indeed a most worthless article, felt by all who have it most to be far more oppressive than gratifying; a popularity of stare and pressure and animal heat, and a whole tribe of other annoyances which it brings around the person of its unfortunate victim; a popularity which rifles home of its sweets, and, by elevating man above his fellows, places him in a region of desolation, where the intimacies of human fellowship are unfelt, and where he stands a conspicuous mark for the shafts of malice, envy, and detraction; a popularity which, with its head among storms and its feet on the treacherous quicksands, has nothing to lull the agonies of its tottering existence but the hosannas of a drivelling generation."

CHAPTER IV.

PAROCHIAL LABORS IN THE TRON CHURCH.

IT might, perhaps, be supposed that so abundant popularity in the pulpit would have satisfied all the desires of a minister, and that his whole efforts would have been directed to the work of making it permanent, or, what is better, to rendering it more practically efficacious upon the hearts of his congregation. But it was far otherwise with Dr. Chalmers. In order to understand his views of the duty of a minister, and the effect of these views upon his conduct, it will be necessary to explain briefly the truths by which he was governed.

Immediately after the change in his religious experiences, of which we have spoken, he entertained the most confident belief of the inherent efficacy of the gospel. It had been in his case, as in that of the apostle Paul, the *power of God unto salvation.* He had felt it to be such; and he wished, first of all, to be the means, through the influence of the Spirit of God, of rendering it such to others. He had, after his manner, with earnestness preached to his people

at Kilmany, and spent about a fortnight once a year in visiting them. The result was, that but few came to his ministry, and those few were careless and inattentive. But when he received the gospel with his whole heart, and became a new creature in Christ Jesus, this manner of performing the duty of an ambassador of Christ did not satisfy him. He preached a different gospel. But this was not enough. Instead of spending two weeks in the year in visiting his people, he now devoted to it a portion of every day. He became deeply convinced that it was not enough to preach the gospel in the pulpit, it must be *carried* to those who did not *come* to hear it. He felt constrained to go into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in. The effect was at once apparent. His church was soon filled, and he saw, what he did not see before, a great change produced in the moral and religious character of his hearers. Souls were converted. The parish began to exhibit the fruits of the Spirit. Nor was this all. He established what now would be called a Bible class, for his young people, which was so greatly blessed, that in after time he could say that he looked back upon this as one of the most useful of all his labors in Kilmany.

Deeply impressed with the results of this experience, he came to Glasgow. His opinion was

fixed that the means used at Kilmany would, if faithfully pursued, produce similar effects here. But he alone could not act upon the whole city. He had no such idea. He believed, however, that, confining his labors to his own parish, the same gospel would as truly be the power of God unto salvation in one place as another. He was immovably convinced of the perfect practicability of assimilating the worst conditioned town to the best conditioned country parish. At that time, the Tron Church parish was believed to contain between eleven and twelve thousand souls. To visit every family of such a population was a Herculean task; yet Dr. Chalmers resolved to accomplish it. He first of all wished to know from personal observation the condition of the people that had been committed to his charge.

To hold religious services in every house would have been impossible. At first, therefore, his visits were generally short. He only asked a few questions regarding the state of the family as to education, church attendance, etc., made a few kindly observations, and passed to the next house, leaving it for the elder who attended him to announce the discourse which would be delivered for the benefit of the neighborhood, on a week-day evening, in some school-house, or other convenient place in the vicinity. The work was hard; the wynds were often close and filthy; the stairs

were narrow and steep; the houses were vile and ill-ventilated; yet cheerfully and resolutely did he carry it through, cheering ever and anon the flagging spirits of his companion as he went along. Writing to a friend in February, 1816, he says, "I have commenced the stupendous work lately, the visitation of my parish. A very great proportion of the people have no seats in any place of worship whatever; and a very deep and universal ignorance, on the high matters of faith and eternity, obtains over the whole extent of a mighty population." While this laborious visitation was going on throughout the week, at the same time the demands of the Tron Church pulpit, and of the thousands now crowding around it, had to be satisfied every returning Sabbath.

This was certainly sufficient to task the energies of any man, however gifted, laborious, and persevering. In addition to all this, Dr. Chalmers was called to endure an annoyance, the extent of which he had hardly anticipated. The Tron Church was one of the oldest in Glasgow; and its minister was, from his office, a member of the committees which controlled the charitable and many of the municipal expenses of the city. As instances in which his time was thus wasted, he relates, that once he was obliged to sit an hour to hear a deliberation on the question, whether a gutter should be shut or left open. Soon after-

wards some of the gravest of the city ministers and some of the wisest city merchants were summoned to the conclave, when the weighty and perplexing question was propounded, whether pork broth or ox-head broth should be served to the inmates of the hospital. Opinions differed; the debate waxed long and warm, and after some hours of discussion it was resolved that henceforth there should be served sometimes one kind of broth and sometimes the other. But this was not all, nor the worst part of it. He found that when he visited the poor, — and it was known of course that he was one of the distributors of the city charity, — he was received everywhere with bland kindness, always terminating in a petition for charity. This greatly diminished his *religious* influence. He determined, therefore, to free himself from the whole of it, and he did so. He then made the people to understand that he only dealt in one article, that of Christian instruction; and that if they chose to receive him on this footing, he would be glad to visit them occasionally. "I can vouch for it," said he, "that the cordiality of the people was not only enhanced, but very much refined in its principles, after this became the general understanding; that of ten thousand entries which I have made at different times into the houses of the poor in Glasgow, I cannot recollect half a dozen instances in which I was not received with welcome."

His visitation of the parish, however, convinced him that if these swarming multitudes were to be reclaimed, who, hidden from the public eye, were living in ignorance and guilt, and dying in darkness, a large band of fellow-laborers must go down with him and enter upon the spiritual cultivation of the neglected territory. As yet it appeared that but little could be expected from the regular office-bearers of the church. In truth, parochial influence was a mere name, it was not even understood. Some of the elders of the Tron Church were excellent men, but their chief duty was to stand at the plate, receive the free-will offerings of the congregation as they entered, and distribute them to the poor, by a monthly allowance. In this respect they too much resembled, if they did not exceed, many of the office-bearers of our churches at the present day in this country. Their spiritual duties and exertions were but small, and mostly *confined to a few of the sick.* The first step in this Christian labor was to ordain as elders some young and less prejudiced men, who might be more efficient coadjutors. On these he relied as his assistants in his visits among the people.

There was, however, one field of labor on which he could immediately enter. He had observed the lamentable extent of ignorance among the young; very few of the children among the low-

est class of the community being in attendance upon Sabbath-evening schools. Convinced that if more schools were opened in the parish, and means taken to bring out the children, a very large increase of attendance might be secured, he invited a few members of his congregation to form themselves into a society for this purpose. At the first meeting of this society, a member reported that he had opened the first of the projected schools, with an attendance of thirteen children. The schools rapidly multiplied, the attendance in each increased, new teachers volunteered, and at the end of two years it was found that upwards of twelve hundred were under regular religious instruction.

The teachers of these schools held monthly meetings, which were always attended by Dr. Chalmers. "Our meetings," says one of the members of the association, "were delightful. I never saw any set of men who were so animated by one spirit, and whose zeal was so steadily sustained. The Doctor was the life of the whole. There was no assuming of superiority, no appearance of the minister directing everything; every one was free to make remarks or suggestions. Dr. Chalmers was ever the most ready to receive a hint or a suggestion from the youngest or least experienced member; and if any useful hint came from such a one, he was careful to give

him the full merit of it, calling it indeed generally by his name."

This success would have satisfied any ordinary man; but, in Dr. Chalmers's view, nothing was accomplished while anything else was attainable. In the progress of the work he was led to make another improvement. These teachers all labored in the parish of the Tron Church, but each one gathered scholars from the whole district, or from any other part of Glasgow. Their work, though invaluable, was somewhat undefined. He resolved to modify it in so far as to apportion a particular district to every teacher. He divided the parish into forty sections, allotting thirty or forty houses to each section. He appointed a local teacher to each section, and told each of them that his specific business was, instead of taking children from all parts of the city, and those that had a previous inclination to attend, to go forth within the limits of his own district, and visit every family, telling them that he had a Sabbath school in the neighborhood, and requesting parents to send their children to it. Instead of waiting for them to come to him, his part was to go to them, and induce the parents to send their children to the school. The result equalled all his expectations. One of the teachers, Mr. Higgie, had one or two closes (alleys) in his district; and there was not a single family who did not send

their children to him to be instructed. He had a goodly number, of thirty or forty children, in his school. What was true of his district was true of all the other districts in the Tron parish. By attaching a district to every Sabbath school, and making it the business of the teacher to go to the children to get them to attend it, in place of waiting till they came to him, instead of having an attendance of little more than one hundred, he had the satisfaction of preaching to an assemblage of not less than one thousand and two hundred scholars. It did not satisfy Dr. Chalmers that the Tron Church was filled from every part of Glasgow, while in his own parish there were eight or ten thousand who were as ignorant of the gospel as heathen. These were the means which he used to bring to these neglected and degraded immortal souls the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. And the seed thus sown brought forth fruit, having seed within itself. On Dr. Chalmers's removal to St. Johns Church, two years subsequently, four of the teachers of this association organized themselves into a separate society. They chose as the field of their operations both sides of the Salt-market, with the numerous lanes that branch off from it, containing a population of 3624 souls, out of which, when they began their labors, there were only 128 children attending any Sabbath school. Instead of

extending their operations at once over the whole of the space, each appropriated a small locality, exerting all his influence to induce others to come and help them. In six months their numbers were complete, the space was covered. Twenty-six schools were opened, thirty-three teachers, including visitors, were engaged, and instead of 128 children, 732 were in attendance. "These schools," says Dr. Hume, "continue to the present day, and there have flowed from this small local Sabbath-school society eight other societies in different parts of the city and suburbs, all fairly traceable to the impulse given in the Tron parish, by Dr. Chalmers, to this branch of parochial economy."

CHAPTER V.

PAROCHIAL LABORS AT ST. JOHNS.

IN the midst of these labors at the Tron Church, the magistrates and counsel of Glasgow had erected a new church, and elected Dr. Chalmers to be its minister while yet it was in course of completion. The new church was considerably larger than the Tron, involving of course more fatigue to the preacher who should occupy its pulpit. The parish was to contain a population of 10,000 souls, composed almost entirely of operatives. With a large church and a worse population, there seemed but little reason why Dr. Chalmers should prefer St. Johns to the Tron, only that this translation promised to open the way for the accomplishment of his favorite project. With the old parishes of Glasgow, the magistrates and council, bound either by law or precedent, could not do as they pleased, nor had any of the ministers or Kirk Sessions a separate and independent parochial authority. It was, however, understood that the official authorities were prepared to go so far along with Dr. Chalmers as to enable him, in his new parish, to try those schemes

of reformation which he was known to have so much at heart, and in which, by the new duties of his position, he had been thus actuated in the Tron Church. Some delay occurred in the completion of the edifice, and it was not until the 31st of March, 1819, that a presentation in his favor to the church and parish of St. Johns, accompanied by his letter of acceptance, was laid on the table of the Presbytery of Glasgow; and on the 3d of June he was formally admitted to the new benefice.

But the difficulties of the settlement were not yet adjusted. Dr. Chalmers's views were large and comprehensive. He was free to carry on his Sabbath schools and visitations in his new parish, but this was not enough. He found that of the children of the parish, a large proportion were unable to read, the parents, in many cases, living in squalid poverty, relying in a great measure on the aid of the funds of the city, destitute of self-respect, and preferring a life of pauperism to honorable, independent maintenance. He desired to raise the whole parish to the condition of an intelligent, self-reliant, cleanly population, a population that should take its place with the most respectable in Glasgow; and this he believed might be done by bringing the gospel home to their hearts, by teaching to every family the practical duties which it enjoins, and exhibiting in daily life the meek-

ness and love which belong to the disciples of Christ. On these means he had the most confident reliance; and he believed them adequate to relieve the distresses and elevate the condition of the most degraded form of humanity. But he wished to be allowed to perform this self-sacrificing labor without interference. He could not obtain even this privilege without much anxious discussion. At length what he required was granted, and he entered upon the parish of St. Johns, determined to try the effect of the gospel upon those who had long been considered as beyond all the ordinary means of reformation. While these negotiations were in progress, he was urged to allow his name to be used as a candidate for the professorship of natural philosophy in the University of Edinburgh, then vacant by the death of Professor Playfair. Into these negotiations it is not necessary for us to enter. It is sufficient for us to remark, that if the arrangements which he thought important for the parish of St. Johns could be made, he would not accept of the professorship; if these failed, he would go to Edinburgh.

Providentially, the difficulties were removed, so far at least as to allow him to continue his work in Glasgow. He entered upon the charge of St. Johns with all the elastic spirit of one emancipated from bondage, and with all the hopeful con-

fidence of one whose faith in the power of moral and spiritual influences, both human and divine, over the very worst of our species, was, perhaps, larger and stronger than that of any other man of his generation.

One of his first steps was to take a census of his parish. He found that it contained a population of 10,304 souls. It was far different from a country parish. It had degenerated, and needed to be reclaimed. Of the 2161 families of which it was composed, 846 families had no seat in any place of worship, and even this proportion gave no idea of the extent to which the public worship of God had been relinquished. The number of sitters in their own parish church scarcely amounted to a hundredth part of the whole population. St. Johns was not only one of the largest, it was the very poorest parish in the whole city. Weavers, laborers, factory-workers, and other operatives, made up the bulk of the population. Such was the nature of the people whom Dr. Chalmers hoped to elevate to the high level of piety, competence, and self-respect, by diffusing among them the benefits of knowledge and the blessings of religion. The points to which he directed his attention, were, in general, *educational*, *religious*, *and economical*.

He had already provided himself with a band of forty-one Sabbath-school teachers, whose num-

ber, however, must be doubled before the whole space could be covered. But experience had taught him that something else was necessary than to impart religious instruction to those who were unable to read. Among the poorer classes, many children were growing up without any, and still more with a very poor and comparatively useless education. Many who had been for some time at school could do no more than blunder through a verse of the Bible, to whom, of course, it was, to all practical purposes, really a sealed book. Much of the evil Dr. Chalmers attributed to the existing means of education. He saw that no beneficial result could be anticipated until proper educational means were provided; and he at once set himself to make an adequate provision.

On Monday, the day after the church of St. Johns was opened, at a meeting of a few members of the congregation organized into an education committee, it was resolved that there should, in the first instance, as soon as possible, be raised by subscription, a sum of money deemed adequate to the erection of one fabric, to include two schoolhouses and two teachers' houses, which, when completed, should in all time thereafter be exclusively occupied for the use and benefit of the parish of St. Johns. Dr. Chalmers headed the subscription by putting his name down for £100, five other gentlemen subscribing each a like sum; and

in the course of a week enough had been pledged to warrant the commencement of the undertaking. Land was purchased, the buildings were erected, and early in July, 1820, were ready for occupation. Dr. Chalmers took the utmost pains to secure for these schools the most competent and efficient teachers. A portion of their salary was paid from the fund already raised, so that the fees for tuition might be within the reach of the poorest who desired to avail themselves of their benefits, and admission was restricted to the parishioners of St. Johns.

It was soon apparent that for the educational demands of the parish of St. Johns alone these two schools were wholly insufficient. At a meeting of the Educational Committee on the 7th August, Dr. Chalmers stated that, though only opened on the 18th of July last, in less than a month the schools were already crowded to excess; that the number of scholars far exceeded the powers of the teachers to do justice to them, while many applicants for admission had been rejected. He proposed the erection of another fabric in the eastern district of the parish. The proposal was acceded to, the second building was raised, and two additional masters were nominated. Within two years from the commencement of his ministry, four efficient teachers, each endowed with a salary of £25 per annum, were educating

419 scholars; and when he left Glasgow in 1823, other buildings were in process of erection, capable of containing 374 additional pupils; so that, as the fruit of four years' labor, he was leaving behind him the means for giving, at a very moderate rate, a superior education to no less than 793 children out of a population of 10,000 souls.

In these schools he took the liveliest personal interest. Said one of the teachers, "His visits to my school were almost daily, and of the most friendly description. In all states of the weather and in every frame of mind, he was there, depositing himself in his usual chair, his countenance relaxing into its wonted smile as he recognized the children of the working classes. Again and again, looking round upon them, his eye beaming with tenderness, he has exclaimed, 'I cannot tell you how my heart warms to these barefooted children.' Sometimes he would enter the school buoyant and congratulatory, introducing the Bishop of —— or Lord and Lady ——, developing to the visitors this or that feature of his parochial system, and generally concluding with the request, 'Now just let us hear one class read a portion before we go.' He never, however, once interfered in the management of the classes. In everything pertaining to the internal management of the school, I was allowed to take my own method."

But it formed no part of Dr. Chalmers's plan to do good by rendering education gratuitous. He knew that the best way of benefiting the poor was to cultivate their self-respect, by teaching them to take care of themselves. At the opening of the first of the St. Johns schools, he invited the parishioners to a meeting, in which he explained to them the plan which he intended to pursue. The following extracts will illustrate the course of his remarks. "The first thing I have to say of these schools is, that in no one sense of the term are they *charity* schools. The education is not given, it is paid for. It is not given to a particular number, as in some schools, where so many poor scholars are admitted gratis, and *marked out by this distinction from the rest of their fellows*. Each scholar comes upon the same independent footing. There is nothing to elevate one but his superior scholarship, there is nothing to degrade another but that he is left behind in the career of emulation.

"The next thing is, that although the fees of attendance are moderate, yet we do not want, on that account, the wealthiest families of the parish to lie off from the benefits of this institution. We desire quite the reverse of this. We recommend the higher classes to send their children here, not for a higher fee, but on the common fee that is paid by all. The peculiarity of these schools is,

that the education is so *cheap* that the poor may pay, at the same time it is so *good* that the rich may receive."

He then alludes to the objection that may be raised against this kind of schools. The first objection is, that the manners and morals of the rich may be contaminated by such an intercourse as he proposes. In reply to this, he shows that the objection is in fact unfounded, and refers to his own experience to establish his assertion. He proceeds: "So far from wishing the children of the various ranks in this parish not to mingle in these schools, we wish them to mingle in them as extensively as they may. Let vice, and blackguardism, and every communication of evil, be guarded against, with all a parent's vigilance and a parent's alarm; but disdain not to associate your children, in scholarship, with the humblest offspring of poverty. A far better and blander state of society will at length come out of such an arrangement. The ties of kindliness will be multiplied between the wealthy and the laboring classes of our city, the wide and melancholy gulf of suspicion between them will be filled up, by the attentions of a soft and pleasant fellowship, and the extreme parties will be more mellowed into one as the intercourse of advanced life is thus softened by the touching remembrances of boyhood."

Again, it was objected that if so general an invitation were thus given, the schools would be filled to excess, and many would be driven away. "Why," says he, "brethren, to tell you the truth, this is just what we want. The louder such complaints are made, the better. We want the demand for such education as we are endeavoring to furnish, to be as great as possible; and this will induce our friends to manifest their wonted liberality, until every want is supplied, and this whole parish furnished with means to reach, in this manner, every individual of our district."

But for what purpose, it is asked, is such an education provided for operatives? Do you wish to make them rich men and capitalists? He answers, By no means. A few of them may rise to eminence, but these must be the exceptions; and we therefore set no such inducements before them. What then is your object? it may be inquired. He answers, Not to turn an operative into a capitalist, but to transform an ignorant laborer into an intelligent one; to stamp upon him the worth and respectability of which I contend he is fully susceptible; though he rise not an inch above the sphere of life in which he now moves, to transform him into a reflective and accomplished individual. I trust the time is coming when humble life will be dignified both by leisure and literature; when the work of the day will be suc-

ceeded by the reading and the conversation of the evening; when many a lettered sage, as well as many an enlightened Christian, will be met with even in the very lowest walks of society; when the elements of science, and philanthropy, and high scholarship, will so ripen throughout the general mind of the country, as to exalt it prodigiously above the level of its present character and acquirements. Our object is to refine alike and dignify every condition of earthliness. The object of diffusing a more copious and rich supply of education among the operative classes is not to furnish them with the means of abandoning their status, but to give them facilities for morally and intellectually exalting it. It is not to raise them on the artificial scale of life, but on that far nobler one which has respect to the virtues of mind and the prospects of immortality. It is to confer a truer dignity upon each of them than if the crown of an earthly potentate were bestowed upon him. It is to pour the stores of knowledge into his understanding, and more especially of that sacred knowledge, by the possession of which he becomes rich in faith, and heir of that kingdom which God hath prepared for them that love him.

Such were the arrangements which Dr. Chalmers originated and carried forward for the education of the parish of St. Johns. We will next

consider the means which he adopted for religious instruction.

The entire parish was divided into twenty-five districts, called proportions, each embracing from sixty to one hundred families. Reviving the ancient order of deacons, which, in the Scottish Presbyterian practice, had long fallen into disuse, Dr. Chalmers appointed over each of these districts an elder and a deacon; the spiritual interests of his *proportion* being committed to the elder, and its temporal interests to the deacon. In each district one or more Sabbath schools were established, male and female teachers to the number of between forty and fifty being engaged in this work, while a few classes were opened for the adult population. There were the ordinary meetings of the Kirk session, the monthly meetings of the deacons and of the Sabbath-school teachers, monthly meetings in the church for missionary purposes, and frequent meetings of the Educational Association, all of which Dr. Chalmers regularly and punctually attended. He was himself the soul and spirit of almost every movement, but there was no desire on his part to dictate and no assumption of superiority. "Our meetings," says one of his elders, looking back over thirty years, "were very delightful. I never saw any set of men who were so animated by one spirit, and whose zeal was so uniformly sustained.

The Doctor was the very life of the whole, and every one felt himself led on by him, committed to use his whole strength in the cause of that good God who had in his mercy sent us such a leader." He was continually receiving reports from every quarter, and answering by notes tending to quicken and animate the soul of every laborer. But this was not enough. Every Monday morning at his house there was an agency breakfast, to which a general invitation was issued, at which from six to eight of his elders, deacons, or Sabbath-school teachers were present. He gave also special invitations to tea; so that most of his agents visited at his house once in six weeks.

Nor did he send forth these agents without instructing them specially in the nature of their work. At the first setting apart of the elders in St. Johns, he addressed them at considerable length, in a most admirable charge. We cannot insert the whole of it, but its substance was much as follows: —

He begins by referring to the importance of their position, and expresses his confident belief, that "there *will never be a general revival of religion until Christians at home go forth among the heathen families around them, with the same enthusiasm that they expect from missionaries who go abroad.*"

He tells them that they have one encouragement

to be derived from the character of the people. They will everywhere be received with kindness and courtesy. They must not, however, be deceived by the conventional welcome which will greet them. This, it is true, will open the door for spiritual effort, but they must not be disheartened if they find, underneath this kindness of exterior, a deep-seated and obstinate opposition to the truths of the gospel. They must not take it for granted that nothing can be done for the souls of *adults*, and that all their labor must be bestowed upon children. It was not so in apostolical times. Then the word of God was powerful to the pulling down of strongholds. They must take for their motto the saying of the missionary Elliot, who wrote on the last page of his translation of the Bible into an Indian language, "Prayers and pains, with the blessing of God, will accomplish anything." And lastly he guards them against the impression that they may fully confide in the perfection of their arrangements and the wisdom of their plans, expecting from them a sure and immediate effect. "We may as well," said he, "think that a system of aqueducts will irrigate and fertilize a country without rain, as that any human economy will Christianize a parish without the living waters of the Spirit, without the dew of heaven descending upon the human administrators, and following them in their various

movements through the houses and families under their superintendence. Still, it is right to have such arrangements as we have established, as it is right to have aqueducts; but the supply of the essential influence cometh from above. God will put to shame the proud confidence of man in his own wisdom, and He will have all the glory of all the spiritual good that is done in the world, and your piety will, therefore, work a tenfold mightier effect than your talents in the work that you have undertaken."

But it must not be supposed that Dr. Chalmers satisfied himself with simply setting his people at work. Soon after his settlement at St. Johns he obtained the services of Rev. Edward Irving, afterward so celebrated, as his assistant. There were three services at St. Johns on the Sabbath, and one at a school-house in another part of the parish. These services they shared equally between them; it being understood, however, that the evening service at St. Johns was specially intended for the residents of the parish. The labors of household visitation were also shared between Dr. Chalmers and his assistant. Dr. C. completed his round of visitation among the families of the parish in two years. His manner of visiting was the same as before. After a short visit to the family, his companion invited them all to attend preaching in some school-house or private house or other convenient

room in the vicinity. Much greater pains, however, were now taken, by himself and his parochial agents, to secure a large attendance at the evening addresses, by which these forenoon visitations were followed up. The success justified the effort. Multitudes who otherwise would never have had the offer of divine mercy addressed to them, were brought within the sound of the preacher's voice. These local, week-day, undress congregations, assembled in a cotton mill or the workshop of a mechanic, or the kitchen of some kind and accommodating neighbor, with their picturesque exhibition of greasy jackets and unwashed countenances and hands all soiled and fresh from labor, turning up the pages of unused Bibles, had a special charm for Dr. Chalmers, and, all alive to the peculiar interest and urgency of such opportunities, he stirred up every gift that was in him, while he urged upon the consciences of his hearers the high claims of the Christian salvation. Many ministers, if they were willing at all to address such audiences, would satisfy themselves with giving them an unpremeditated exhortation, which they too properly would speak of as merely *a talk*. Dr. Chalmers did not so look upon the matter. He knew that these were immortal souls for whom Christ died. His chosen and beloved friend, Mr. Collins, who often accompanied him to these evening meetings, gave his reiterated and emphatic

testimony, that no bursts of that oratory which rolled over admiring thousands in the Tron Church or St. Johns, ever equalled, in all the highest qualities of eloquence, many of these premeditated but unwritten addresses, in which, free from all restraint, and intent upon the one object of winning souls to the Saviour, that heart, which glowed with such intense desires for the present and eternal welfare of the working classes, unbosomed in the midst of them all the fulness of its Christian sympathies.

In the year 1820 Mrs. Chalmers and some of the family were with his mother at Anstruther. His residence being at some distance from St. Johns, he took rooms within the bounds of the parish, which he occupied during the day, in order that he might more conveniently see and visit his people. "I see and feel," said he, "the mighty charm of being much among the people in the capacity of next-door neighbor."

From these lodgings he writes to his wife the following account of his labors: — "As it is, I spend four days a week visiting the people, in company with the agents of the various districts over which I expatiate. I last week overtook between 700 and 800 people, and had great pleasure in the movement. This I am usually done with in the forenoon, and then dine generally in the vestry, or at a friend's house. In addition to

this, I have had an agency tea every night excepting yesternight, and in a few evenings more I expect to overtake the whole agency of the parish. At nine, I go out to family worship in some house belonging to the district of my present residence, where I assemble the people of the *land* or close vicinity, and expect, ere I quit my present quarters, in this way to overtake the whole of this district. I furthermore have an address every Friday night to the people of my vicinity, in the Colton Lancasterian school-room, and a weekly address will be necessary for each of the four weeks in St. Johns Church to the people whom I have gone over in regular visitation. Add to all this the missionary monthly meeting, held yesternight, and you will find that, without one particle of study, I am in full occupation. I study only on Fridays and Saturdays, and am happy to say that the stock prepared by me in Kirkaldy is serving me out abundantly in my pulpit ministrations." The reference to the stock of sermons prepared at Kirkaldy is, I presume, to sermons written at that place. Dr. Chalmers was in the habit of seizing some hours of every day, in his visits from home, in writing sermons or articles for the press.

It was in this manner that he labored to preach the gospel in the parish of St. Johns. It did not satisfy him that thousands attended his church on the Sabbath day, listening in rapt admiration to

eloquence such as nowhere else was heard in Christendom. These were but a small portion of the parish of St. Johns. By far the greater part were ignorant of the gospel, and had never heard of the way of salvation. He turned to these with his whole heart, he entered all their dwellings, he gathered them in school-houses, factories, kitchens, wherever he could find an audience room, he engaged Christians to aid him in his work, many of whom were his own children in the faith, and he was not satisfied until the darkest places in St. Johns parish were illuminated with the knowledge of salvation.

But before we close our account of his labors in Glasgow, it will be proper to recur to the means which he employed, or rather originated, for the *economical* improvement of his parish.

In order to aid us in understanding this subject, it will be necessary, in a few words, to explain the municipal arrangements of Glasgow for the aid of the poor. These are so unlike anything we have in this country, that very possibly I may commit errors in endeavoring to explain to others what I do not sufficiently well comprehend myself.

So far as I understand, the city of Glasgow is divided into parishes, as our cities are divided into wards. Over these parishes the magistrates of the city, in many respects, hold jurisdiction. I think they have a voice in the choice of a minis-

ter. Collections for the poor are made at the church door twice every Sabbath day. These collections are paid over to the magistrates from every parish, and are united with the annual income accruing from legacies made in former times by benevolent individuals for this purpose, and with the assessment of poor-rates made upon every individual. These sums are then divided by the authorities among the several parishes, and distributed by the officials of the government to the poor who may have contrived to cause their names to be inserted on the poor-roll. There seems to be nothing left to the parish but to contribute the money. But little personal examination was ever made by the officials who distributed it. There was no intercourse of any kind between the giver and the receiver. It was, for the most part, simply assessment on the one hand on one party, and official distribution to the other. In this way no kindly feelings would be enkindled between the parties. What was received by the pauper was considered as his right; and it tended directly to foster indolence and vice, and to wither every sentiment of self-respect. In this manner the cost of the poor in the parish of St. Johns alone amounted to the immense sum of £1,400 annually; and while it was doing nothing to diminish, it rather increased pauperism.

Dr. Chalmers was deeply impressed both with

the economical and moral evils of this system, and with the help of God he hoped to remove it. His plan was, to have the parish of St. Johns set off by itself; to have all the Sabbath collections committed to the officers of the church; to relinquish all claim on the fund raised by assessment, and then to support all the poor of the parish merely by its own benefactions. The magistrates consented to the trial of the experiment, with the almost universal belief that it was vain and chimerical. All these changes could not of course be made at once. This was, however, the point at which he aimed, and what in fact he ultimately accomplished.

The annual amount received from church collections was £400 in the morning and afternoon services, and £80 in those of the evening. With this sum Dr. Chalmers undertook to meet the demands of the pauperism of the parish, which had previously required £1,400.

The distribution of this charity was committed to the deacons of the church. The first care of Dr. Chalmers was, to instruct them particularly in the manner of discharging their office. The directions which he gave them were minute and precise. He says to them, "Whenever any one applies through the deacon for admittance upon our funds, the first thing to be inquired into is, if there be any kind of work that he can do, so

as to keep him altogether off, or as to make a partial allowance serve for his necessities; the second, what his relatives and friends are willing to do for him; the third, whether he is a hearer in any dissenting place of worship, and whether its session will contribute to his relief. If, after these previous inquiries, it be found that further relief is necessary, then there must be a strict ascertainment of his term of residence in Glasgow, and whether he rests on the funds of the Town Hospital, or is obtaining relief from any other parish. If, upon all these points being ascertained, the deacon thinks him to be an object for our assistance, he will inquire whether a small, temporary aid will meet the occasion, and state this at the first ordinary meeting of the deacons. But if, instead of this, he considers him a fit subject for a regular allowance, he will receive the assistance of another deacon to complete and confirm his inquiries by the next ordinary meeting thereafter; at which time the applicant, if they still think him a fit object, is brought before them, and received upon the fund at such a rate of allowance as, upon all the circumstances of the case, the meeting of the deacons shall think proper. Of course, pending this examination, the deacon is empowered to grant the same sort of discretionary aid as is customary in other parishes." To another he writes, "Be kind and courteous to the people,

while firm in your investigations about them; and just in proportion to the care with which you investigate, will be the rarity of the applications that are made to you." It was thus soon perceived that the very last thing which a deacon would allow was, that any family should be chargeable on the parish funds. "If drunkenness be a habit with the applicant," says he, "this in itself is an evidence of means, and the firmest discouragement should be put upon every application of this kind." The drunken were told to give up their drunkenness, and that until they did so their case would not even be considered. The idle were told to set instantly to work, and if they complained that work could not be gotten, by kindly application to employers they were helped to obtain it. The improvident were warned that, if, with such sources of income as they had, or might have, they chose to squander and bring themselves to want, they must just bear the misery of their own procuring.

Furnished with such instructions, and stimulated by the letters and conversations of Dr. Chalmers, the deacons of St. Johns commenced their interesting work. This was at first both delicate and difficult. The people had been led to suppose that Dr. Chalmers had invented a plan by which aid was to be more freely and liberally bestowed. This misconception was soon rectified.

Nor was it difficult to carry the mind and feeling of the community in favor of the methods proposed. To acquire a proper knowledge of the character, habits, and means of every applicant, required a considerable expenditure of time, and the exercise of no ordinary patience, firmness, and careful discrimination. It was, however, some compensation to know that the work, once done, did not need to be done again; and that the more thoroughly it was done, the smaller would be the number of the applicants.

Deceptions in great numbers had been practised under the former methods of relief, but these faded away under searching investigation. Some of the cases were such as these: One woman who had been receiving aid, who had four children and one in arms, and whose husband was said to be in the infirmary, was found to live a mile out of the parish, and her husband was an industrious weaver. She was a drunkard. Another woman, in tears, applied for aid to bury a grown-up daughter, who had died that day. Upon consulting with another deacon, it was suggested that she might be the same whom he had assisted to bury her husband, who had died some six months before. Upon finding the family, the buried husband and dead daughter were found performing all the usual functions of life. Again, another man was found in the receipt of a weekly

allowance, who had eight workmen under him. By personal examination, such cases were discovered; and, so far as possible, the number of persons receiving aid was limited to those only who really needed assistance.

But this was not all. Those who were really needy were, by kind words and friendly suggestions, encouraged by all means to endeavor to support themselves, and thus avoid the humiliation of receiving public charity. Such efforts were in many cases successful. Where aid was really needed, Dr. Chalmers found a new source of relief by awakening the sympathy of neighbors, and encouraging them to assist each other. It is remarkable to observe how large a fountain of charity was thus opened, and its streams soon gladdened the poorest parts of the parish. Not only was aid for the suffering thus readily and promptly extended, but the poor at once rose from the class of receivers into that of benefactors, and were thus taught the luxury of doing good. And that the needy were not in St. Johns parish worse provided for than those in other parishes, was evident from the fact, that nearly twice as many persons came into the parish as left it.

At first, this work was laborious and time-consuming. After the deceptive cases had been sifted out, and each of the deacons became acquainted with his district, and both they and the appli-

cants well understood the principles on which aid would be afforded, the labor was easy. At the last it appeared that the time occupied by the deacons in the performance of their duty did not average more than three or four hours a month. In fact, the St. Johns deaconry, mingling as it did familiarly with all the families, and proving itself by word and deed the true but enlightened friend of all, did far more to prevent pauperism than to provide for it.

The results of this noble experiment may be easily stated. After the first year, the church of St. Johns assumed the whole cost of pauperism in the parish, and this cost was met by the Sabbath-day contributions at the door of the church. It was all accomplished by an expenditure of £280 per year, without any cost to the city, while previously it had required the sum of £1,400. Nor was this all. The collections in about four years had exceeded the expenditure by £900; and of this excess, £500 were appropriated to the endowment of one of the parochial schools, to which we have previously alluded. Had this plan been faithfully carried out in the other parishes of Glasgow, and thus the whole city been subject to the same management, the annual cost of pauperism there would have been reduced from the sum of £120,000 to that of £12,000 per year, and an unspeakable blessing would have resulted

to the social, moral, and religious interests of the city.

It was by many supposed that all this was effected by the personal influence of a single individual, and that at his removal the experiment, so successful in the hands of Dr. Chalmers, would soon prove a failure.

In speaking on the subject before the General Assembly, in 1822, Dr. Chalmers eloquently said, "Do with the first adventurer as you will; order him back again to the place from which he had departed; compel his bark out of its secure and quiet landing-place, or let it be scuttled, if you so choose, and sunk to the bottom; still, not to magnify our doings, but to illustrate them, we must remind you that the discovery survives the loss of the discovery ship; for, if discovery it must be called, the discovery has been made; a safe and easy navigation has been found from the charity of the law to the charity of kindness; and therefore, be it now reviled, or be it now disregarded as it may, we have no doubt on our spirits, whether we look to the depraving pauperism or to the burdened agriculture of our land, that the days are coming when men, looking for a way of escape from these sore evils, will be glad to own our enterprise, and be fain to follow it."

But it was not left to theory or prediction to settle this question. The Rev. Dr. Macfarlane

succeeded Dr. Chalmers in the incumbency of St. Johns, and he has left the following testimony on this subject: "The experience of sixteen months, during which I was minister of St. Johns, confirmed the favorable opinion which I previously entertained of the system. It *worked well in all respects.* With an income from collections of not much exceeding £300, we kept down the pauperism of a parish containing a population of 10,000, and I know, from actual observation, that the poor were in better condition, and, except the worthless and profligate who applied and were refused assistance, were more contented and happy than the poor in the other parishes of Glasgow. I was also agreeably disappointed at finding that Dr. Chalmers was not the only person having sufficient influence to obtain the aid of the respectable members of the congregation in administering the affairs of the poor; I had not the smallest difficulty in procuring a sufficient number of deacons for this purpose."

Ten years afterwards Dr. Chalmers informed the committee of the House of Commons that the whole cost of St. Johns' pauperism had for the preceding year been £384, or, deducting the expense for deserted children and lunatics, which owing to peculiar circumstances, had come to press heavily upon the parish, it was £232.

At the end of 1833, an English poor-law com-

missioner, E. C. Tufnell, Esq., visited Glasgow, and after careful inquiry as to the state of matters at St. Johns, drew up a report, of which the following is an extract: —

"This system has been attended with the most triumphant success; it is now in perfect operation, and not a doubt is expressed by its managers of its continuing to remain so. Its chief virtue seems to consist in the closer investigation which each new case of pauperism receives, by which means the parish is prevented from being imposed upon, and as it is well known by the poor that this severe scrutiny is never omitted, attempts at imposition are less frequently practised. . . . . This personal attention of the rich to the poor seems to be one of the most efficient means of preventing pauperism. It is a subject of perpetual complaint that the poor do not receive the charities of the rich with gratitude. The reason seems to be, that the donation of a few shillings from a rich man is no subtraction from the giver's comforts, and no proof of his interest in the poor man's welfare. If the rich give their *time* to the poor, they part with that which is known to be valuable to the giver, and the poor esteem the attention the more, as it implies an interest in their prosperity, and they become more unwilling to press upon the kindness of those who sympathize with them in their distress and do their utmost to relieve it.

This feeling acts as a spur on the emotions of the poor; their efforts to depend on their own resources are greater, and consequently the chance of their becoming dependent on the bounty of others less."

Such were the labors which, in addition to the supply of the pulpit at St. Johns, occupied the attention of Dr. Chalmers. It will naturally be supposed that his unbounded popularity, his extensive acquirements, his genial manners, and his great conversational powers, would give him a welcome introduction to circles of the highest refinement in Glasgow. Such was the fact. There was hardly a drawing-room in Scotland that would not have been honored by his presence. But all the pleasure which this might have afforded him he cheerfully relinquished, and spent the time which general society would have consumed, upon the lanes and closes of the poor and degraded in Glasgow. He did this from a deliberate view of his duty as a minister. In his remarks at the public dinner given to him in Glasgow, one of the most remarkable that has ever been given to a private individual, he refers to this subject in the following words: "The parish that was assigned to me as the field of my labors" (a field, by the way, which he had himself chosen), "introduced me, I may say, both to the profit and the luxury of many acts of friendship with the poor, and I have had but rare and

occasional intercourse with the higher classes of society in Glasgow." It is worthy of remark that this very intercourse with the poor had, among other things, been the occasion of the most signal manifestations of respect and veneration and cordial attachment that any private individual had ever received from every grade of his fellow-citizens.

We have seen the extent of Dr. Chalmers's labors among the poor. It may be asked, Did not his labors in behalf of the rich suffer in consequence? the souls of the rich are as valuable as those of the poor, and a minister of the gospel may not innocently neglect one class of his parishioners for the sake of benefiting the other. It will be a sufficient answer to these questions to introduce the remarks of Dr. Hanna, in which he gives a brief summary of the results of Dr. Chalmers's labors as a preacher. After mentioning a number of cases, either as individuals or representatives of classes, to whom his ministry, through the blessing of God, had been eminently blessed, he adds: "The more general effects of his ministry in its bearings upon the religious condition of Glasgow and of Scotland lie open enough to observation. When Dr. Chalmers came to Glasgow, by the great body of the upper classes of society evangelical doctrines were nauseated and despised; when he left it, even by those who did not bow to

their influence, these doctrines were acknowledged to be indeed the very doctrines of the Bible. When Dr. Chalmers came to Glasgow, in the eye of the multitude evangelism stood confounded with a drivelling sanctimoniousness or a sour-minded asceticism; when he left it, from all such false associations the Christianity of the New Testament stood clearly and nobly redeemed. When Dr. Chalmers came to Glasgow, for nearly a century the magistrates and the town council had exercised the city patronage in a spirit determinately anti-evangelical; when he left it, so complete was the revolution which had been effected, that from that time forward none but evangelical clergymen were appointed by the city patrons. When Dr. Chalmers came to Glasgow, there and elsewhere over Scotland there were many most devoted clergymen of the Establishment who had given themselves up wholly to the ministry of the word and to prayer, but there was not one in whose faith and practice week-day ministrations had the place and power which he assigned to them; when he left it, he had exhibited such a model of facility, diligence, and activity in all the departments of ministerial labor as told finely upon the spirit and practise of the whole ministry of Scotland. When Dr. Chalmers came to Glasgow, unnoticed thousands of the city population were sinking into ignorance, infidelity, and vice, and his eye was the first in

this country to foresee to what a fearful magnitude that evil, if suffered to grow unrebuked, would rise; when he left it, his ministry in that city remained behind him, in permanent warning to a nation that had been slow to learn that the greatest of all questions, both for statesmen and for churchmen, is the condition of those untaught and degraded thousands who swarm around the base of the social edifice, and whose brawny arms may yet grasp its pillars, to shake or destroy. When Dr. Chalmers came to Glasgow, in the literary circles of the Scottish metropolis a thinly-disguised infidelity sat on the seats of greatest influence, and smiled and scoffed at a vital and energetic faith in the great and distinctive truths of revelation, while widely over his native land the spirit of a frigid indifference to religion prevailed; when he left it, the current of public sentiment had begun to set in the contrary direction, and although it took many years, and the labor of many other hands, to carry that healthful change onward to maturity, yet I believe it is not overestimating it to say, that it was mainly by Dr. Chalmers's ministry in Glasgow, and by his efforts in the pulpit and through the press, that the national opinion and sympathy were turned."

It was at the very time that Dr. Chalmers was occupying this unrivalled field of usefulness, that the church of St. Johns was startled by the an-

nouncement that he had accepted the professorship of Moral Philosophy in the University of St. Andrews, the place of his education. The university was quite remote, its funds were small, its students comparatively few, the salary of the professor was meagre, and Dr. Chalmers had already declined six invitations to lucrative and highly honorable situations. He called a meeting of his elders, deacons, and Sabbath-school teachers, and at once made known his decision, and the reasons of it. His first reason was the failure of his health, which had succumbed under the extraordinary pressure which the necessities of the situation laid upon him. He says, "My very last attempt at exertion out-of-doors has been followed up by several weeks of utter incapacity for fixed thought." This evident indication of an overworked brain was certainly a very impressive monition.

The second reason was, that if it were possible to relieve him of his duties, he could not with a good conscience continue. His attention had of late been strongly drawn to subjects of general philanthropy, in writing upon which he believed that he did what was pleasing to God. Should his parochial labors be diminished, he should be obliged to devote much of his time to the business of authorship, instead of giving it all to the parish; and thus he would become, not in form, but in fact, a pluralist.

By removing to St. Andrews his labors and responsibilities would be greatly diminished; the long vacation would give him ample opportunity for recreation, the retirement of the place would give him better command of his time, and he would be the better able to pursue those studies which seemed to hold forth the promise of a more extended usefulness; and especially he would have an opportunity of teaching the truths of religion to those who were so soon to become the teachers of their fellow-men, as ministers of the gospel, and as the leaders of public sentiment in the various secular departments of public life.

It was evident to all that Dr. Chalmers had fully decided the subject for himself, and that remonstrances and entreaties were alike useless. He left Glasgow amidst the universal regrets of all classes of persons, whether of the Established Church or Dissenters, whether Whig or Tory in politics. The whole city loved and honored him, and overwhelmed him with the universal expression of love and veneration, which was the more emphatic because it was wholly unexpected.

On Friday, the 14th of December, Dr. Chalmers delivered his introductory lecture at St. Andrews, the place of his residence for the next four years.

Of the various intellectual labors which Dr. Chalmers prosecuted during this period, it is not our purpose to take particular notice. He pre-

pared and delivered his course of lectures on moral philosophy; he published the third volume of his work on the Christian and civic economy of large towns; he gave much attention to the internal concerns of the University, and he took an important interest in the proceedings of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, of which he was an active and most eloquent member. We, however, pass over these labors enti our design being simply to present a view of efforts in every place for the promotion of the cause of Christ and the salvation and benefit of his fellow-men.

CHAPTER VI.

CHRISTIAN LABORS AT ST. ANDREWS.

THE position of Dr. Chalmers in St. Andrews was peculiar. From Glasgow, an active and wealthy commercial city that had become proud of his talents, and whose citizens crowded his place of worship in admiring multitudes, and where his influence may be described as almost unbounded, he found himself in a small and quiet city, remote from the great lines of travel, his business, so far as official duty was concerned, being to lecture to a class of one or two hundred young men and boys. The population of St. Andrews itself was large enough for the labors of many Christian philanthropists; but the elders and deacons of St. Johns were absent. There was no agency, even on the smallest scale, to carry out any general operations over the town, or any of its parishes. What, in these circumstances, was the course to be pursued? He might have attempted to produce an impression upon the public mind, and arouse St. Andrews from its apathy, by such sermons as had produced those thrilling

effects in Glasgow. He might have waited till the people were generally moved, before he himself commenced a work which should affect simultaneously the whole city. In a man so singularly gifted, this might have seemed a natural and wise method of Christian effort.

But Dr. Chalmers did none of this. He began his labors in the most quiet and unobtrusive way. True to his own principles, as soon as the fatigues of the first session were over, he marked out for himself a district of the town adjacent to his place of residence; he visited its families, and invited the children to attend a class in his own house, on the Sabbath evenings. No public announcement was made, no general invitation was issued; and the district appropriated being small, the attendance on the class was at first limited. Yet for that little group, composed of the poorest children he could gather around him, he prepared as carefully as he did for his class in the University,—some stray leaves still existing on which the questions for the evening are carefully written out. As the existence of such a class became better known, the applications for admission increased, and one or two of the parents having obtained admission as auditors, others followed, until the room was crowded. By the time, however, that this class became burdensome from its numbers, new and more important claims upon his labor had arisen.

One of his pupils, Rev. Dr. Miller, of Glasgow, gives us an account of his labors in a somewhat different direction. "On being sent to college," says Dr. M., "my father commended me to Dr. Chalmers's spiritual care. His labors for the first term rendered this impossible. In the next session it was suggested to him that he might act somewhat of a father's part to some of the children of his old friends, by taking us into his house on Sabbath evenings, and giving us that religious instruction to which we had been accustomed at home. He at once consented to this, and during that winter, five of us met regularly on Sabbath evenings, when he instructed us and dealt with our souls as if we had been his own children. By another year, this little meeting was noised abroad, and, at the earnest solicitation of their parents, other students were admitted to the privilege of attending it, till the little company had increased to about a dozen. It was his earnest desire not to have a larger number, for he wished to look on us and deal with us as in a family character. And so he did in the way of parental counsel and prayer, joined with the approved old fashion of catechizing. By the next year, however, applications became so numerous and pressing, that he at length yielded, and his large dining-room was completely crammed with students of all sorts and sizes. His course of instruction then became

more like a familiar lecture, very simple and conversational, but more valuable on that account. We all felt that we learned more of really Christian ethics at these meetings than by all his exercises in the class-room of moral philosophy."

The increase of this class obliged Dr. Chalmers to commit the care of the Sabbath school to another. The person whom he selected for this office was John Urquhart, with the record of whose talents, piety, and early death many in this country are already familiar. Of his success in this Christian labor, as well as his eminent Christian character, Dr. Chalmers was in the habit of speaking in the most enthusiastic terms. In writing of his intercourse with Dr. Chalmers at this time, Mr. Urquhart remarks: "Dr. Chalmers has been more than kind to me this year. As my school is held in his I generally sup with him on Sunday evening. I enjoy far more of his conversation than at tea parties. I was much gratified by a walk which had with Dr. Chalmers to visit the parents of the children who attend his school. The people in some of the houses seemed to recognize him familiarly; so that he is probably frequently engaged in these labors of love. He thinks such exercises as visiting the poor and the rich the best introduction to ministerial labor. 'This,' he said, as we were going along, 'is what I call preaching the gospel to every creature; and that cannot be done by

setting yourself in the pulpit as a centre of attraction, but by going forth and making aggressive movements upon the community, and by preaching from house to house.'" Sentiments quite similar to this last are to be found in Dr. Chalmers's Horæ Sabbaticæ. Thus, on 1 Cor. 14, "Let me have a higher value for charity than for all talent; and of this latter too let me prize the talent of useful instruction more than the powers that please and astonish, and so are more fitted to aggrandize him who owns them, and give him a more splendid reputation among men. Never let me aspire after such a language as might prove an unknown tongue to the common people. Save me from such literary ambition, and pardon, O God, my every wrong and vain effort at the wisdom of words, but let me deal with such words as may be easily understood. Let me preach not as a man of gifts, unintelligible to many, but as a man of grace, commending myself to the conscience of all."

But to return. The school of Mr. Urquhart, in Dr. Chalmers's house, was not long alone. It was good fruit, having seed within itself. A number of schools had risen out of it, and at last they quite studded the city, and a number of the students of the University, encouraged by their professor's example, had given themselves to similar labors. They proceeded to divide the town

into districts, to visit all the families, and to establish schools in every necessitous quarter. Dr. Chalmers wisely did not put himself at the head of this movement, but encouraged the young men to labor in connection with the parish to which the district belonged. Principal Haldane and several of the professors kindly encouraged the movement. Nor was this a blessing confined to the poor in whose behalf it was originated. Their common engagement in the evening schools led the students to hold Sabbath morning meetings for prayer and counsel, — meetings at which the hallowed fire that glowed in every breast grew warmer at the touch of a congenial flame.

But this step only led to another. The visitation of the districts, for the purpose of bringing out the young to school, had revealed a great and unexpected amount of religious indifference and neglect among the adult population, — a discovery which, when made by ardent youths panting to do good, was not long in being followed up by active efforts to relieve the destitution. The zeal, indeed, which embarked in these efforts did not confine itself to St. Andrews, but flowed out upon adjoining districts. "There is a new system," said Mr. Urquhart, "of religious instruction which has been attempted at St. Andrews, which I think is a most efficient system for evangelizing large towns. The plan is very simple. We first in-

quired after some persons residing in different quarters of the town who were religiously disposed. We called on these, and requested the favor of a room in their house for a few of their neighbors to assemble in for religious purposes. We expected a group of eight or ten persons to assemble, but were astonished to find the attendance increase in some of the stations to fifty or sixty. Many of these never went to church. Churchmen and Dissenters all went hand in hand, and we forgot that there was any distinction. We have here Mr. H. (now Dr. Hoby), a Baptist minister from London, who has come to attend Dr. Chalmers's lectures, and has been very useful. He and Mr. A. have established several preaching stations in the country round, where the people seem eager to hear the gospel."

At the same time, while all this was going forward, other doors were opened to fields of usefulness which Dr. Chalmers cheerfully entered. It seems that a missionary society, composed of Christians of different denominations, had for some time existed in St. Andrews. Of this society Dr. Chalmers was invited to become president. He would not accept it until it had been offered to and declined by others whose official position entitled them to this token of respect. Having, however, accepted it, he at once turned what might have been merely an empty honor into an

occasion of extensive usefulness. As the association was composed of Christians of different denominations, he made himself particularly acquainted with the history, success, or failure, and present state of every missionary society. At each meeting, he would direct the attention of the audience to some particular society; he would set forth the excellences of each, read the most interesting extracts from its reports, interspersed throughout with suggestions of his own, and followed up by addresses calculated to animate his hearers with the love of missions and every other good work.

The monthly meetings of the missionary society had previously been but ill-attended, but under such ministrations the attraction grew, the attendance swelled, the room was found to be too small, and an adjournment at last took place to the Town Hall. At these crowded assemblies, where many of the most influential townspeople attended, old prejudice was softened, and a new respect and attachment to evangelical Christianity was in many instances created.

Such were the changes which, by the grace of God, were gradually going forward in the city and vicinity of St. Andrews. At the same time, changes of a still more remarkable character were witnessed in the University itself.

"Whether the students of St. Andrews," says Dr. Duff, "were in reality worse than the stu-

dents of other colleges, I have no means of ascertaining; but somehow or other they had obtained a worse name. Historic truth requires it to be recorded that the St. Andrews students as a whole were, previously to the advent of Dr. Chalmers, a singularly godless, Christless class. At the United College there was only one who was reputed to be pious, and who dared to face the derision and the scorn of being so reputed. He was the butt and the joke of every one, under the familiar name of 'the Bishop.' Nor was St. Mary's or the Divinity College much better. Indeed, some of the divinity students were even more notorious for their impiety, immorality, and riotous revellings than any in the Philosophy College. Such was the University of St. Andrews before the day of its merciful visitation in November, 1823; such the region of sceptical darkness and error on which the light of a great luminary broke in; such the mass of moral putrescence on which a portion of quickening salt then fell; such the realm of spiritual death which was then disturbed by the tread of a living man!"

Shortly after Dr. Chalmers's arrival, and encouraged by his sympathies and countenance, a few of the divinity students formed themselves into an association, with the intention of reviewing and supporting missions, which held its meetings in a private room. The existence of such an associa-

tion led to the subject of missions being frequently spoken of among other students, so that, in various ways, the minds of many were gradually prepared to give it a candid consideration.

Early in the session of 1824–25, a few students were assembled in the room of one of the saintliest youths that ever trod the stage of time, — the pious, the devoted, the heavenly-minded Urquhart. Among other religious topics, that of missions to the heathen furnished a theme for conversation. The question was started as to the possibility of forming a missionary society among the students of the Philosophy College. The desirableness of the object was admitted by all. There were many tremblings of heart, and great misgivings on account of the apathy of the majority, and the scoffs of the enemies of the undertaking. Yet there were some who were willing to endure all this and more for a cause in behalf of which they could confidently rely upon the promised aid of an omnipotent Saviour. Their counsels at last prevailed. Paper was produced, the scheme of a society was drafted, and to it the names of those present attached. In a few days fifty or sixty more names were added, a union was formed between it and the small association in the Divinity College of which we have before spoken, and thus originated the St. Andrews Missionary Society, which at last ranked among its friends more than one-third of all the attendants of both colleges.

The society was formed, but where should they hold their meetings? Their number was too great to be accommodated in any student's private room in college. They naturally applied to the officers of the college for the use of one of the lecture rooms, once a month. This request was politely but peremptorily refused. Some of the officers regarded the meeting as thoroughly *unacademical*, and others as too puritanical and Methodistical, and almost all believed that it would divert young men from their appropriate studies. After much effort they at length secured the use of a very small and inconvenient school-room. This was in the session of 1824–25.

The winter of 1825–26, however, witnessed a surprising change in the prospects of the missionary society. By this time, Dr. Chalmers's exercises in the Town Hall had taken effect upon the minds of thinking men and women. They became interested in the history and objects of missions; so that what had been before looked on with contempt, now that the facts were known, became an interesting matter of conversation. Dr. Chalmers's lectures on moral philosophy were imbuing his class, and through them the city, with the ethical principles of the gospel of Christ, and they saw that he was in earnest, for he exemplified them in his life. While in his lecture-room he enforced the doctrine of benevolence, he was seen visiting

from house to house among the poorest of the parish, conversing with them on the salvation of the soul, and gathering their children into his house for the instructions of a Sabbath school. The students themselves nobly did their part in removing the prejudices against the missionary society. It had been in operation for a twelvemonth, and its members proved themselves to be neither idle dreamers, visionary fanatics, nor careless and backward students. On the contrary, it was found that its most zealous partisans were precisely those who bore the highest character for diligence, steadiness, and general good behavior; and not only so, but were those who carried away the highest honors in every department of classic literature, science, philosophy, or theology.

Under exhibitions such as these, prejudice itself yielded. Some of the professors relinquished their opposition, others became decidedly friendly. Dr. Nichol, principal of St. Salvator's College, received the missionary works sent to him thankfully, and of his own accord rendered to him pecuniary assistance. In 1824–5, no room could be granted in the University in which they could hold their meetings. In 1825–6, Dr. Haldane, the principal of St. Mary's, voluntarily came forward, and in the most cordial and generous manner declared the Divinity Hall at their service, or any other place which his influence could command.

The results of these efforts in the University have already become a matter of Christian history. Of the three hundred who, during his residence in St. Andrews, were under his instruction, very many are now filling posts of usefulness in the church of Christ. The most remarkable fact in connection with his instructions was, that a very unusual number devoted themselves to the work of foreign missions, and in that department of Christian labor greatly distinguished themselves. Among these may be mentioned Rev. Mr. Nesbit of Bombay, Mr. John Adam, Dr. Alexander Duff, Rev. Mr. Mackay; and, last, Mr. John Urquhart was in preparation for the same field of labor, when he was called to serve in the upper sanctuary. More than one missionary came out of each college session, and two out of every hundred students. "What other University record," asks Dr. Hanna, "can present a parallel?"

Of the general effect of Dr. Chalmers's labors, Dr. Duff speaks with enthusiasm. "Altogether," says he, "what a change in the course of two or three years! Whatever may have been the extent of inward spiritual renovation, no one could question the extent of outward, visible amelioration in the religious aspect of things. Religion, which had long settled down to zero, or many degrees below it, was sensibly raised in its temperature, and in some instances kindled into an inextin-

guishable flame. The long repose of stagnation and death, with its teeming brood of corruptions, was effectually disturbed, and out of the strife and conflict of hostile elements a new progeny, fraught with life and purity, began to emerge, and in the missionary libraries and assemblies and prayer-meetings, the Sabbath schools and preaching-stations in town and country, an extensive machinery was erected for the diffusion of life-giving influences all around. And all this suddenly springing into existence from the presence of one man! Those who could compare what St. Andrews was immediately before Dr. Chalmers's residence there, and what it was two or three years after his arrival, were constrained to feel that no language could more appropriately express the greatness of the change than that of the prophet Isaiah: 'The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, and the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.'"

CHAPTER VII.

DR. CHALMERS'S RESIDENCE IN EDINBURGH — CHURCH EXTENSION.

IT was in the midst of this signal career of Christian usefulness that Dr. Chalmers was unexpectedly removed to Edinburgh, which became his residence for the remainder of his life. On the 31st of October, 1827, the Town Council and magistrates of the city elected him to fill the chair of Divinity in the University of Edinburgh. He was not, however, expected to commence the performance of the duties of the professorship until the November of the following year; and thus the opportunity of a year's vacation would be afforded him for the preparation of a new course of lectures. He heard of his election on Thursday, November first; and on Tuesday, the sixth, his preparations had commenced. On the third of November, 1828, he took a final leave of St. Andrews, and proceeded at once to Edinburgh, to enter upon the discharge of the new duties which he had assumed.

The first duty which pressed upon Dr. Chalmers was, of course, the preparation of his the-

ological lectures, which he immediately commenced. This required special care, as his reputation had attracted a large number of hearers from the most intelligent classes of laymen in Edinburgh. He was the man of the most mark in Scotland. Tourists from England and the Continent, of any note, whether literary, religious, or scientific, if they could procure introductions to him, and frequently even without any, called on him as a matter of course. These visits were rendered the more time-consuming than they would otherwise have been, by his abundant hospitality, his genial temper, and the brilliancy of his various and fascinating conversation. He was known to be at the head of the General Assembly of Scotland; he paid great attention to all its interests, and was a frequent member of its most important committees. The authorship, to which he had before directed considerable attention, was now resumed as one of the permanent occupations of his life. The consideration of these interesting topics we shall omit, wishing merely, as we have proposed, to present the parochial and other labors of Dr. C., in his efforts to advance the cause of Christ and promote the salvation of souls.

Two of the greatest efforts of his life, aside from those which may be styled truly parochial, were that undertaken to promote the cause of *church*

extension; and that which resulted in the *origin and establishment of the Free Church.* We will as briefly as possible allude to both of these, premising, however, that ecclesiastical cases in Scotland and America are so dissimilar that very likely I may not succeed in making myself perfectly understood.

In order to take a correct view of Dr. Chalmers's course through this period of his life, it will be necessary briefly to allude to some of the admitted truths by which his conduct was governed. I say admitted truths, because, though some of them may be matters of doubt to others, yet to him they were all clear and indisputable verities.

1. In the year 1834, at a public meeting in Edinburgh, Dr. Chalmers thus made known the noble object to the accomplishment of which his whole life was consecrated: "*The dearest object of my earthly existence*," said he, "*is the elevation of the common people, humanized by Christianity, and raised by the strength of their moral habits to a higher platform of human nature; and by which they may attain and enjoy the rank and consideration due to enlightened and companionable men.* The imperishable soul of the poor man is of as much price in the sight of Heaven as the soul of the rich; and I will resist to the uttermost, I will resist even to the death, that alienation which goes but to swell the luxury of the higher

ranks at the expense of the Christianity of the lower orders."

These words express the object to the attainment of which his whole life was consecrated, and for which, not theoretically but practically, he was willing to make every sacrifice.

2. In the next place, he believed that the gospel, and the gospel alone, had the power to elevate men to their proper rank in this life, and prepare them for glory, honor, and immortality in the life to come. He was, therefore, intensely desirous that the gospel might be preached *to every creature;* for he believed that until it is thus preached, no proper trial is made of its power.

3. He became convinced from his own personal observation that the gospel was not thus preached in Scotland. In the cities especially, and to a considerable extent in the country, the gospel was preached to but a fraction of the inhabitants. A portion of the highest rank, and more of the middle classes, might attend once on the Sabbath day, the masses going very seldom, and most of them not at all. If it were said that through those who *hear*, the gospel finds its way to those who *hear not*, the answer is, that such is not the fact; but that, on the contrary, the progress of luxury is rendering wider and deeper the chasm which divides the upper classes from the masses of the community. He had found that a minister might preach to admiring crowds on the Sabbath, and

preach the gospel in earnest, and then, within a few stones-throw of the church, plunge into the midst of a godless heathenism, as dark and benighted as he could find in India. I much fear that what was true of Glasgow is now, to a considerable extent, true of many a ministration of the gospel in our own country.

4. Dr. Chalmers believed that a remedy might be found for this sad state of things in Scotland. He had made the experiment in St. Johns. He had left the Tron Church, with all its opulence and social consideration, in order to make it. He had seen the changes which the gospel, when carried to the families of the poor, had wrought in four years. The case did not any longer admit of argument; it was open to the examination of the whole community. The fact could not be denied, and the cause could not be misunderstood; it was all done simply by carrying the teaching and the practice of the gospel of Jesus Christ, attended by the Spirit of God, to every family within the confines of the parish.

5. With that wonderful power of generalization, and that confidence in general principles,[1]

1 A remarkable instance of Dr. Chalmers's confidence in general principles occurred in his early history. At the time when he was rebuilding the manse at Kilmany, the discovery of olefiant gas was announced, which it was said could be used with great advantage in place of oil and candles, for the purposes of illumination. He at once placed gas pipes through his house, confident that the time would come when they would be needed. Probably this house was the first in Scotland that was prepared to take advantage of the new discovery.

by which he was so signally distinguished, he at once transferred the cases of St. Johns and Kilmany to the whole of Scotland. He saw everywhere, throughout his native country, the lower classes sinking deeper every year in ignorance and vice. Heathenism was actually gaining upon Christianity; and he trembled when he anticipated the day when the careless, the rich, the luxurious and effeminate, would come into collision with ignorant, lawless and unprincipled masses. For so universal an evil he sought for an equally universal remedy. He longed to arouse the nation to an attempt to avert a national evil. He desired to call upon the disciples of Christ to obey the last injunction of their Master, and go forth bearing in their hands the message of salvation, carrying it to the thousands around them, that so the perishing multitudes might be rescued from impending perdition.

6. There was another belief of Dr. Chalmers, which, though somewhat out of place, may as well be noticed here. It was, that since religion is necessary to a nation's prosperity, if not indeed to its permanent existence, it is the legitimate duty of the government to uphold it. He desired, therefore, an *established* church, for which the government, either in whole or in part, should erect houses of worship, establish parishes, and pay the ministers. Having done so much, how-

ever, it must stop. "The church, thus established in its religious and ecclesiastical concerns, must be perfectly free. Government can no more lay a finger on the minister or the people, while in the discharge of the duties which they owe to Christ, than a burglar may enter his neighbor's house. An *organized provision*, as he said in another place, is all that we contend for. We want, in other words, a legal provision for the support of a Christian ministry, without the slightest infringement on the spiritual prerogatives of the church, or the ecclesiastical independence of her clergymen. We have no other communication with the state than that of being maintained by it, after which we are left to regulate the proceedings of our great home-mission, with all the purity and the piety and the independence of any missionary board. In things ecclesiastical, we decide all. They are not, they cannot be forced upon us from without. We own no head of the church but the Lord Jesus Christ. Implicated as the church and state are imagined to be, they are not so implicated as that, without the concurrence of the ecclesiastical courts, a full and final effect can be given to any proceeding by which the good of Christianity and the religion of our people may be affected. There is not a clerical appointment which can take place in any one of our parishes till we have sustained it. In things ecclesiastical,

the highest power of our church is amenable to no higher power on earth for its decisions. It can exclude, it can deprive, it can depose at pleasure. External force might make an obnoxious individual the holder of a benefice, but there is no external force in these realms that could make him a minister of the Church of Scotland. The king, by himself, or by his representative, might be the spectator of our proceedings; but what Lord Chatham said of the poor man's house, is true in all its parts of the church to which I have the honor to belong. In England, every man's house is his castle; not that it is surrounded by walls and battlements; it may be a straw-built shed; every wind of heaven may whistle around it, every element of heaven may enter it, but THE KING CANNOT, THE KING DARE NOT."

Such were Dr. Chalmers's views, whether right or wrong, of an established church, and such in his opinion the relation which subsisted between it and the government. We have gone into them more particularly, because these, which he considered first principles, were the causes of one of the greatest acts of his life, — the disruption of the established church of Scotland. We have another reason. Dr. Chalmers delivered a course of lectures, by invitation, before a select audience of the highest of the land, on religious establishments, and he has been accused of great incon-

sistency, in so soon afterwards taking the lead in breaking loose from the Scottish establishment altogether. But it is to be remembered that it was just these views of an establishment which he maintained in London, and which were received with rapturous applause by the ablest and noblest of the realm; and to no passage was that applause more emphatic than to that just quoted, ending, "the king cannot, the king dare not." His views before his audience in London, and those in the pulpit and the General Assembly, seem to me to be identical. And yet, many of those who applauded this sentiment in London, when he honestly, and in the spirit of a martyr, carried it into practice in Edinburgh, were the loudest in accusing him of inconsistency, while he only adhered to that great principle which he had always held, and so frequently and fervently advocated.

Before entering upon the labors of Dr. Chalmers in the work of church extension, it may be well to allude to a pleasing incident which occurred at this time.

In the year 1832, Dr. Chalmers was honored by election to the moderatorship of the General Assembly. It is known that at the meetings of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, the majesty of Great Britain is represented by one of the peers of the realm, who is present at all the meetings, and who is supposed to add greatly to the imposing nature of that august assembly.

It had from time immemorial been the custom for the High Commissioner to give a daily public dinner, and the moderator a public breakfast to the members of the Assembly, during the continuance of the session. These entertainments were given on the Sabbath as well as other days of the week. To Dr. Chalmers this seemed a sort of desecration of the Sabbath. The Sunday breakfast he could discontinue at his own motion, but he was always specially invited and expected to attend the dinner at the High Commissioner's, and how should he be excused? Under these circumstances he wrote the following note to Lord Belhaven, his Majesty's representative: —

"EDINBURGH, May 3, 1832.

"MY LORD: — On the chance, which I now see to be a likely one, of my becoming moderator of the next General Assembly, there is one point respecting which I beg to throw myself on the indulgence of your Lordship. I could not without pain be present at the public dinner on Sundays, and I feel that nothing more is necessary than the bare communication of this feeling, to make your Lordship willing to dispense with my attendance on these occasions. I have made no one else privy to this communication, preferring that the matter should be adjusted by a liberal and understood arrangement between your Lordship and myself,

to its becoming a subject of public discussion. At the same time, let me not disguise my conviction (and I ask your Lordship to pardon the liberty I take in expressing it), that it were better if the Sunday dinners were altogether dispensed with. I feel quite assured, my Lord, that did such an arrangement originate with yourself, it would be felt as a strong additional claim to those already possessed by your Lordship on the respect and gratitude of the Church of Scotland. With many apologies for this intrusion,

I have the honor to be, &c. &c.

"THOMAS CHALMERS.

"TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE LORD BELHAVEN."

This letter met with the most gracious reception. The personal request was not only at once acceded to, but the general suggestion was willingly adopted. The Sabbath dinners, as well as the Sabbath breakfasts, were then, and have since that time been discontinued. "And, I believe I may add," says Lord Belhaven, "that no measure ever gave more general satisfaction." It is a pleasing mark of distinction and remembrance which thus attaches to Dr. Chalmers's moderatorship.

Throughout his life the soul of Dr. Chalmers was engrossed with the idea of which we have spoken, — the devising of means by which the gos-

pel might be carried to every family of Scotland. As early as 1817, he had made an effort for the erection of twenty new churches in Glasgow. It was then, at the commencement of his labors, smiled upon as visionary. The effects of his ministry in due time worthily manifested themselves. In 1834, Mr. Collins, a very intimate friend of Dr. Chalmers, undertook to accomplish what had been unsuccessfully attempted seventeen years before. His object was to erect by private benevolence twenty new parish churches. An association was formed, the public was appealed to. No active step was to be taken until £20,000 were subscribed. This was in the summer. Before the month of October this sum was realized. In close coöperation with Dr. Chalmers, he labored steadily for the accomplishment of this object, and in 1841, seven years from the inception of the undertaking, these noble men saw the twentieth church completed.

The triumphant success which attended the effort of a private individual, a layman, in Glasgow, had its suitable effect upon the General Assembly of the Established Church. It stimulated them to serious effort, by showing them how abundant were the rewards that accompanied Christian labor in Scotland. Since the days of the Reformation the population of Scotland had more than doubled itself; yet the number of parishes and churches

had not increased. To maintain the same relative amount of religious instruction, fourteen hundred ministers and churches should be added. His own investigations in the Tron parish satisfied him that of the working classes generally not one-half attended church, while large and crowded districts existed in which not above one-eighth had sittings in any place of worship, or made any profession of Christianity. It was evident that the masses of the people were living without God in the world; nay, it is hardly too much to say that the whole country was steadily, in the midst of religious forms, tending to heathenism.

As soon as Dr. Chalmers, by personal observation, became convinced that this was the fact, he set himself at once to remedy the evil. He seems to have been the first person who plainly looked the matter in the face. The church, however, was slow to move. In 1828, a committee was appointed on the subject, and they so far performed their duty as annually to memorialize the government, and report year after year that nothing had been done. At last, in 1834, quickened by the successful efforts of Mr. Collins, the Assembly reäppointed its committee on church accommodation, furnished it with new powers and new instructions, and gave the best assurance that it was in earnest by placing Dr. Chalmers at its head.

The Assembly had scarcely dissolved, when Dr.

Chalmers summoned the large and influential committee of which he was chairman, and presented his views of their position and their duties. After alluding to the fact that a committee of this sort had been in existence since 1828, and had unsuccessfully appealed to government; and that now the Assembly had conferred upon them new and sufficient powers, he states that "if he had been left to choose out of the countless diversities of well-doing, this one, of convener of this committee, is that which he would have selected as the most congenial to his taste, and the most fitted by the high sense which he entertained of its importance for commanding the devotion of all his powers to it." At the conclusion of his address he adds: "I trust the committee will not relax in its exertions, and not relinquish them even though it should require the perseverance of a whole generation, till we have made it a sufficiently thick-set establishment, and brought it into a state of full equipment; till churches have been so multiplied, and parochial charges so subdivided, that there will not one poor family be found in our land who might not, if they will, have entry and accommodation in a place of worship, and religious instruction, with such a share in the personal attentions of the clergyman as to claim him for an acquaintance and a friend."

Such was the noble idea which Dr. Chalmers en-

tertained of the duty to which he was called; it was no less than to send the gospel, with all its blessings for time and eternity, to every family throughout the whole of Scotland. And this was not mere theory, — he was really in earnest about it; and for the five subsequent years he gave to it all the time which was not demanded by the duties of his professorship, and those other labors of the press to which he believed himself specially called.

In June, a few weeks after this appointment, he had prepared a circular, which was approved and immediately printed, and in a few days was on its way to every corner of the land. The ministers were called upon, in virtue of the vote of the Assembly, to take up collections in all their parishes. He wrote letters personally to those on whose liberality the church had the highest claim. He corresponded with clergymen in every part of Scotland. Nor did he stop here; he appealed to government for aid, and asked that when the churches should be built by voluntary contributions, the government would make an allowance for each minister who should be called to the parish. In this part of the work his correspondence was voluminous, and it brought him into immediate contact with the ministry of the time. For a while it appeared probable that he would succeed. It seemed as if the government would look upon his plan with favor. Objections, however, arose;

there were evident indications that the interference of the government would be unpopular, and in the end it was apparent that neither political party would do anything about it.

Disappointed but not disheartened, he turned with undiminished hope to the people. He redoubled his labors, issued pamphlet after pamphlet, wrote in every direction, and at the close of the year made his first report to the Assembly. From this report it appears that in a single year upwards of sixty-five thousand pounds (325,000 dollars) had been contributed, and sixty-four new churches, about as many as the whole preceding century had given birth to, had been or were being built in connection with the Establishment.

During the years 1835–36–37, the great object of home evangelism was prosecuted with unflagging devotion. To the means already in use, another and important mode of arousing the attention of the people was added. A sub-committee was formed for the purpose of organizing meetings, in various parts of Scotland, which should be addressed by influential individuals who should advocate the cause in the most popular and effective manner. Associations were formed in every part of the land. Dr. Chalmers himself took several journeys into various parts of Scotland, presenting the subject to multitudes with all the

power of his eloquence. The result was most encouraging. As the result of four years' labor, he announced to the Assembly that nearly two hundred churches had been added to the Establishment, for the erection of which upwards of two hundred thousand pounds (about a million of dollars) had been contributed. He adds: "The work is still far from its termination; it has, so to speak, only begun. Cases of the most helpless and affecting destitution remain to be overtaken. There are wastes of poverty, irreligion, and crime which have still to be redeemed, and which nothing but the effective operation of a territorial Establishment, wisely, strenuously, and perseveringly conducted, is adequate to subdue; and until every such moral wilderness is explored and reclaimed, and the whole country presents the aspect of a field which the Lord hath blessed and is causing to bring forth the fruits of righteousness, the committee may not rest from their labors, nor the people from their hearty and zealous coöperation."

It is not necessary to follow Dr. Chalmers minutely to the close of this protracted and most successful effort. In the year 1839, he devoted himself to journeys into various parts of Scotland, and everywhere, as we have remarked, with encouraging success. He was now in his sixtieth year, and was beginning to feel the effects of age. In making his last report to the Assembly, he thus

alludes to himself: "The convener of your committee, who has prepared the above report, craves permission to close it with one brief paragraph that is personal to himself. He finds that the labors and requisite attention of an office which for six years he has so inadequately filled, have now become too much for him; and for the sake of other labors, and other preparations more in keeping with the arduous work of a theological professorship, as well as with the powers, and he may add the prospects and duties of advanced life, he begs that he may now be suffered to withdraw. He to whom you assigned so high and honorable an office as the prosecution of this object, and who now addresses you in the capacity of its holder for the last time, will not let go the confident hope that under the smile of an approving Heaven, and with the blessing from on high, glorious things are yet in reserve for the parishes of Scotland; and though his hand, now waxing feeble, must desist from the performances of other days, sooner will that hand forget its cunning than he can forget or cease to feel for the church of his fathers."

When he resigned his office as a member of the committee for church accommodation, the result of his labors may be thus summed up. There had been added to the Established Church of Scotland, through the efforts of the committee,

two hundred and twenty-two churches, at the cost of £305,747 11*s*. 2½*d*.,[1] or more than a million and a half dollars. Such were the results of the labors of Dr. Chalmers in the cause of church extension.

[1] A pound is reckoned at $4.80 American currency.

CHAPTER VIII.

LABORS CONNECTED WITH THE ORIGIN AND ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FREE CHURCH.

WE have seen above how greatly the labors of Dr. Chalmers were blessed in the matter of church extension. But this was only a part of his work. For the past five years a great change had been visible in the Assembly of the Established Church. For a long period preceding, it had sunk into a condition of formalism, and might have been with too much truth denominated an incubus upon the cause of Christ. A gradual but steady improvement had, however, taken place; and it was evident from the majorities on all important questions, that a new spirit had been breathed into the Assembly, and that neither with the masses of the communicants, nor with the members of the Assembly, their delegates, was religion to be any more a matter of form. The amount collected for the public religious enterprises in which the Assembly was engaged was in 1839 fourteen times greater than it had been in 1834. Speaking of this brief but brilliant

period, Dr. Chalmers says, "We abolished the union of offices, we are planting schools, we are multiplying chapels, we are sending forth missionaries to distant parts of the world, we have purified and invigorated the discipline, we are extending the church and rallying our population round its venerable standard, we are bringing the sectaries again within its pale, and last, though not least, we have reformed the patronage; and our licentiates, instead of a tutorship in the families of the great as their stepping-stone to preferment, now betake themselves to a parochial assistantship, or to a preaching station, with its home-week of Christian usefulness among the families of the surrounding poor, as the best preparation for the duties of their high calling." We by no means, of course, assert that these changes in the Established Church were owing to Dr. Chalmers alone. With him were associated Drs. Thompson, Candlish, Welsh, Gordon, Cunningham, and many others, men of distinguished ability; still it is no exaggeration to say that they all looked upon him as their leader, by far the most important man of them all. When he relinquished the labor of the church extension committee, he considered the active work of his life as ended. He had begun to feel the infirmities of age. He had suffered one attack of disease that plainly indicated to him his danger from paralysis. He desired to

retire from public service, except the duties of his professorship, and devote the remainder of his days to more private Christian effort, and the preparation of his own soul for the glorious change which was rapidly approaching.

But little did he know of the labors which were yet to be devolved upon him. Little did he anticipate that the prosperous effort and the Christian unity of the Assembly were to be exchanged for earnest if not bitter contention, ending at last in a wide disruption; and that he would be called upon to assume the heaviest responsibility throughout this succession of changes.

It will be perceived, of course, that we refer to the non-intrusion controversy, the disruption, and the establishment of the Free Church of Scotland. To enter into a narrative of these transactions in detail is not our purpose. Nor is it necessary. Our modes of thinking in this country are widely different from those in Scotland. While we agree with Dr. Chalmers and his associates in many respects, yet in others, especially his unwavering attachment to establishments, we greatly differ. It is evident, therefore, that to enter upon the subject at large would consume more time than it can reasonably demand, and, what is more, it would be time that can be much more satisfactorily employed. We shall therefore only present such of the more important facts as will en-

able us to form a conception of the labors which Dr. Chalmers felt himself called upon to undertake.

Some time in the year 1834 the Earl of Kinnoul, the patron, presented to the parish of Auchterarder, in Perthshire, a Mr. Young, as the minister of the church then vacant. After he had preached on two successive Sabbaths in the pulpit of the late vacant church, a day was appointed for moderating a call, that is, for inviting the people to express their concurrence in his settlement. In a parish containing three thousand souls, only two of its inhabitants came forward on that day to sign the call; and when an opportunity was afforded for the male communicants to express their dissent, out of three hundred entitled to this privilege, two hundred and eighty-seven gave in their names as dissentients, and all expressed their readiness to make solemn declaration that they were actuated by no factious or malicious motives, but solely by a conscientious regard to the spiritual interests of themselves and the congregation. The Presbytery declined to ordain Mr. Young, and the case came before the General Assembly. Acting in obedience to the directions of the Assembly, the Presbytery in 1835 rejected Mr. Young, so far as regarded this particular presentation. To the astonishment of the church, the patron and his presentee brought an action

against the Presbytery, before the Supreme Civil Court. After a full hearing, the court decided that the Presbytery had acted illegally, and in violation of their duty, and contrary to the provisions of certain statutes. An appeal was carried to the House of Lords, which sustained the decision of the Court of Sessions. Subsequently Lord Kinnoul and Mr. Young raised a second action against the Presbytery of Auchterarder, to recover damages, laid at £16,000 ($76,800), by way of compensation for the injury sustained by the patron and presentee, in consequence of Mr. Young's rejection. The Court of Sessions found this action relevant, and on the 9th of August, 1842, the House of Lords, sitting as a court of appeals, confirmed the judgment, and declared that damages were recoverable by the pursuers. A variety of other cases followed, in which the civil courts, sustained by the House of Lords, assumed the entire control of the church in matters purely spiritual and ecclesiastical. To enter into them in full is not necessary, but we insert, from a protest drawn up by Dr. Chalmers, the several points in which the civil power assumed the government of the church.

They assumed, —

1. That the courts of the Church by law established, and members thereof, are liable to be coerced by the civil courts, in the exercise of their spiritual functions, and in particular in the ad-

mission to the holy ministry and the constitution of the pastoral relation, and that they are subject to be compelled to intrude ministers on the reclaiming congregations, in opposition to the fundamental principles of the church, their views of the Word of God, and to the liberties of Christ's people.

2. That the said civil courts have power to interfere with and interdict the preaching of the gospel and administration of the ordinances as authorized and enjoined by the church courts of the Establishment.

3. That the said civil courts have power to suspend spiritual censures, pronounced by the church courts of the Establishment, against ministers and probationers of the church, and to interdict their execution as to spiritual effects, functions, and privileges.

4. That the said civil courts have power to reduce and set aside the sentences of the church courts of the Establishment deposing ministers from the office of the holy ministry, and depriving probationers of their license to preach the gospel, with reference to the spiritual status, functions, and privileges of such ministers and probationers, restoring them to the spiritual office and status of which the church courts had deprived them.

5. That the said civil courts have power to determine on the right to sit as members of the

supreme and other judicatories of the church by law established, and to issue interdicts against sitting and voting therein, irrespective of the judgment and determination of said judicatories.

6. That the said civil courts have power to supersede the majority of a church court of the Establishment, in regard to the exercise of its spiritual functions as a church court, and to authorize the minority to exercise the said functions, in opposition to the court itself, and to the superior judicatories of the Establishment.

7. That the said civil courts have power to stay processes of discipline pending before courts of the church by law established, and to interdict such courts from proceeding therein.

8. That no pastor of a congregation can be admitted into the church courts of the Establishment, and allowed to rule as well as to teach, agreeably to the institution of the office by the Head of the church, nor to sit in any of the judicatories of the church, inferior or supreme, and that no additional provision can be made for the exercise of spiritual discipline among the members of the church, though not affecting any patrimonial interest, and no alteration introduced in the state of pastoral superintendence and spiritual discipline in any parish, without the sanction of a civil court.

So far as I am able to determine, these allega-

tions are sustained by the facts in the history of the case.

"All which jurisdiction and power, on the part of the said civil courts" (say the protestants) "severally above specified, whatever proceedings may have given occasion to its exercise, is in our opinion in itself inconsistent with Christian liberty, and with the authority which the Head of the church has conferred on the church alone."

Immense efforts were made by Dr. Chalmers and the leading members of the Established Church to prevent a collision. Committee after committee visited London to confer with the ministry and the most prominent members of parliament. Their hopes were excited both by the Whig and the Tory party, but all were destined to end in utter disappointment. Both ministry and parliament were inexorable. Lords Brougham and Cottenham, and indeed I believe all the law lords, were against them, holding distinctly that the civil power had this authority over *an Established Church*. At last it became evident that those who supported the doctrine of non-intrusion must submit the church to the will of the civil courts, in matters purely spiritual and ecclesiastical, or they must leave the church and resign their benefices. They at once chose the latter alternative.

The fact of the disruption is in itself so interesting that it is well worth insertion. The an-

nual meeting of the General Assembly for the year 1843 arrived. The day, May 18th, came for the opening of the Assembly, and all Edinburgh was thronged with visitors, all expecting that before the sun should set some act involving the dearest interests of the church would take place. After some preliminary proceedings, Dr. Welsh, the moderator, entered and took the chair. Soon afterwards his Grace the Lord High Commissioner was announced, and the whole Assembly rose and received him standing. Solemn prayer was then offered up. The members having resumed their seats, Dr. Welsh rose. By the eager pressure forward, the "Hush! hush!" that burst forth from so many lips, the anxiety to hear threatened to defeat itself. The disturbance lasted but a moment. "Fathers and brethren," said Dr. Welsh, — and now every syllable fell upon the ear amid the breathless silence that prevailed, — "according to the usual form of procedure, this is the time for making up the roll. But in consequence of certain proceedings affecting our rights and privileges, proceedings which have been sanctioned by her Majesty's government and by the legislature of the country, and more especially in respect that there has been an infringement on the liberties of our constitution, so that we could not now constitute this court without a violation of the terms of union between church and state

in this land as now authoritatively declared, I protest against our proceeding further. The reasons which have led me to come to this conclusion are fully set forth in the document which I hold in my hand, and which, with the permission of the house, I will now proceed to read." After reiterating the injuries which had led to the present crisis, he closed as follows: "We protest that in the circumstances in which we are placed it is and shall be lawful for us, and such other commissioners chosen to the Assembly appointed to have been this day holden as may this day concur with us, to withdraw to a separate place of meeting for the purpose of taking steps along with all who adhere to us, maintaining with us the confession of faith and the standards of the Church of Scotland, for separating in an orderly way from the Establishment, and therefore adopting such measures as may be competent to us, in humble dependence on God's grace and the aid of the Holy Spirit, for the advancement of his glory, the extension of the gospel of our Lord and Saviour, and the administration of the affairs of the Lord's house according to his holy word; and we now withdraw accordingly, humbly and solemnly acknowledging the hand of the Lord in the things that have come upon us because of our manifold sins, and the sins of our church and nation; but at the same time with assured conviction that we

are not responsible for any consequences that may follow from this our enforced separation from an Establishment which we loved and prized, through interference with conscience, the dishonor done to Christ's crown, and the rejection of his sole and supreme authority as King in the church."

Having finished the reading of this protest, Dr. Welsh laid it on the table, turned and bowed respectfully to the Commissioner, left the chair, and proceeded along the aisle to the door of the church. Dr. Chalmers had been standing immediately on his left. He looked vacant and abstracted while it was being read, but Dr. Welsh's movement awakened him from his revery. Seizing eagerly his hat, he hurried after him with all the air of one impatient to be gone. Mr. Campbell of Menzie, Dr. Gordon, Dr. Macfarlane, Dr. McDonald followed him. The effect upon the audience was overwhelming. At first a cheer burst forth from the galleries, but it was almost instantaneously and spontaneously restrained. It was felt by all to be an expression of feeling unsuited to the occasion. It was checked in many cases by an emotion too deep for any other utterance than the fall of sad and silent tears. The whole audience was now standing gazing in stillness upon the scene. Man after man, row after row, moved all along the aisle, till the benches on the left, lately so crowded, showed scarce an oc-

cupant. More than four hundred ministers and a still larger number of elders had withdrawn. Thus was the Established Church of Scotland rent in twain, and the Free Church called into being.

Lord Jeffrey was sitting reading in his quiet room when one burst upon him, saying, "Well, what do you think of it? more than four hundred of them are actually out." The book was flung aside, and springing to his feet, Lord Jeffrey exclaimed, "I'm proud of my country! There's not another country upon earth where such a deed could have been done."

The non-intrusionists at once repaired to a large hall that had been previously prepared, and immediately organized themselves into a General Assembly by choosing Dr. Chalmers moderator by acclamation. They proceeded to business immediately, and took such measures as were necessary for the establishment and perpetuity of a Presbyterian Church of Scotland. They continued in session about a fortnight, engaged in deep and earnest deliberation, and their proceedings were marked by great forethought, determined purpose, and entire unanimity.

The position of Dr. Chalmers on this occasion was such as rarely falls to the lot of man. Here were more than five hundred ministers who by one act had relinquished their churches, their

houses of residence, their means of support, and who with their families were cast helpless on the world. Nor was this all; they had incurred the dislike if not the scorn of the large majority of the upper classes, who could not possibly understand the principles by which they were governed. These men had followed Dr. Chalmers because they believed him to be right, and still they looked to him as their truest friend, and by far their most powerful advocate. He felt the responsibility of his situation in his inmost soul, and though worn out by previous labors, and of course, like the rest of them, deprived of his office, he threw his whole being into the cause. It was necessary to build five hundred churches, and a manse for each, to raise a fund to aid in the support of the churches which then were feeble, to erect school-houses, to establish a college and theological seminary, and to support their missions abroad. The undertaking seemed hopeless. But few of the rich or noble were his friends, or the friends of the undertaking. Most of his once cherished associates of the upper classes looked upon him as a disturber of the peace, and almost as a rebel against the government. His hope was in God, who does not desert a righteous cause, and on the middling classes, and the poor, from whom God commonly selects his chosen ones.

Before the disruption took place he had done

what was practicable to prepare for it. The fact that five hundred ministers for conscience sake had made such sacrifices, aroused the feeling of good men everywhere, and specially in Scotland. He was appointed convener of the committee on the sustentation fund, and before the close of the first session of the Assembly he was able to report that six hundred and eighty-seven associations had been formed for the support of the ministry, two hundred and thirty were in full operation, and had already transmitted to the treasury £17,000 ($81,600); and he added that if the remaining associations acted with the same liberality, the collections would amount to £74,000 ($355,200) per year.

In one week, £16,578 ($79,574) had been collected from associations, for the fund for building churches, which, added to the larger donations from individuals for this object, made previous to the disruption, presented a no less sum than £104,776 ($502,924) already available for the use of the building committee. Dr. Chalmers was encouraged by this beginning, but to him it was only the beginning. He says, "We shall not stop short, I trust, in our great and glorious enterprise, till, in language you have already heard, the light of the gospel be carried to every cottage door within the limits of the Scottish territory. This will open a boundless field for the liberality of our Christian brethren; a bright and beautiful ulterior to which

every eye should be directed, that each may have in full view the great and glorious achievement of a church commensurate with the land in which we dwell; and every heart be animated with the magnificent aim, to cover it with the requisite number of churches, and, with God's blessing on the means, Christianly to educate, and, in return for our performance and prayers, to Christianize the whole of Scotland." Thus far-reaching and expansive were his views, and thus did the great object of his life give coloring and direction to every effort. He had been obliged, for conscience sake, to leave the Establishment; he was laboring to organize and sustain another church which had grown out of the disruption; but also he had never forgotten the object to which in early days he had consecrated his life, to raise to their appropriate level the degraded masses of Scotland, by carrying the gospel, with the influences of the Spirit, to every family of the land.

During the first year of the Free Church the sufferings of many of the ministers were extreme. These were all borne, however, in the spirit of men who chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. To relieve their distresses Dr. Chalmers left no effort unemployed. He seized every opportunity for making tours over Scotland, and to call men of every rank to their aid. At the

next annual meeting of the Free Church Assembly, the reports were yet more encouraging. The missionaries in foreign stations had, without exception, declared their adhesion to the Free Church. For their support the Free Church, in addition to her other expenditures, appropriated £32,000 ($153,600), a sum greater by £12,000 ($57,600) than had been raised by the undivided church the year before the disruption. In the first year of its existence, the church, which at its commencement numbered 470 clergymen, had erected 500 churches; and yet the work of church-building was far from finished, for the people had forsaken the Establishment in a much higher ratio as to numbers than the ministers, and more than 700 churches were required to accommodate the congregations who were ready to attach themselves to the Free Church. As many as 114 candidates had been ordained in the course of the year, adding nearly one-fourth to the number of ministers. Setting aside the generous aid rendered by strangers, upwards of £300,000 ($1,440,000) had been contributed by a community which at that time could not embrace so much as one-third of the people of Scotland.

In 1844, Dr. Chalmers was obliged by increasing infirmity to withdraw from public labor in the Assembly of the Free Church. He however lived to witness its progress to the close of its

fourth year. The result at this time is worthy of the deepest consideration. Here was a Christian community not of the wealthiest classes, upon which 470 clergymen had suddenly been thrown, and which had not only accepted and fulfilled the obligation to sustain them, but in four years had added 250 more to the regular ministry which it upheld. At a cost of £450,000 ($2,160,000) it had erected churches for all its congregations, and in addition to this had subscribed £100,000 ($480,000) to build manses for all its ministers. It had instituted a college with nine professorships, to each of which a salary of from £300 ($1,440) to £400 ($1,920) per annum was attached. It had 340 students under education for the holy office, among whom bursaries and scholarships to the amount of £700 ($3,360) had been distributed in a single year. By one effort it had raised £50,000 ($240,000) for the erection of 500 school-houses, and it had already connected with it about 600 schools, in which nearly as many children were instructed in the ordinary branches of education as were in attendance at all the endowed parochial schools in Scotland. For the teaching and training of schoolmasters it had two extensive normal establishments, one in Glasgow, the other in Edinburgh. At home, 110 licentiates and 116 catechists were engaged in the spiritual instruction of the people, while abroad it had agents in every

quarter of the habitable globe. At Perth, at Jassy, at Berlin, at Constantinople, seventeen missionaries and assistants were endeavoring to promote the conversion of the Jews. At Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, Puna, and Nagpur it supported fifteen European clergymen ordained as missionaries, nine converted natives engaged in the work of the Christian ministry, and a large band of teachers and assistants, both native and European, from whom 4,000 Indian children were receiving a complete Christian education. In Nova Scotia, the Canadas, the West Indies, the Cape, Australia, Madeira, Malta, Leghorn, and Gibraltar, there were ministers supported in whole or in part by the bounty of the Free Church, while £1000 ($4,800) per annum had been intrusted to the evangelical societies of France and of Geneva, to aid in the circulation of the gospel over the continent of Europe. In 1847 the Free Church raised for educational and missionary purposes three times as much as the United Church of Scotland did in 1843, the year of the disruption. It had continued for four years to yield the princely revenue of £300,000 ($1,440,000), and in that short period had contributed about a million and a half pounds to the Christian cause. All this was done by a church which commenced in 1843, stripped of everything but a pure conscience and a solemn determination to lose everything rather than the

favor of God. I do not know that the history of the world records an instance of more noble liberality, or an instance in which simple trust in God has received a richer and more signal reward. Here was a community only four years old, which had already attained the standing of an old, intelligent, zealous, and most successful church of Christ. Of the part which Dr. Chalmers took in this Herculean work, I suppose were he present he would only allow us to say with the apostle, "I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."

CHAPTER IX.

DR. CHALMERS'S LABORS AT THE WEST PORT.

NOTWITHSTANDING the great success of Dr. Chalmers in his labors for the Free Church, he was not satisfied with the results. He had looked at the whole population of Scotland, and made himself acquainted with its gigantic evils. He had hoped to arrest a general decline by arousing to Christian action the whole population. To accomplish this purpose he had commenced the effort in the Established Church to multiply churches, and thus to scatter thickly over the land the means of grace. He hoped to see the whole of Scotland divided into parishes of a manageable size, and each parish subdivided into districts, and each district confided to the care of a deacon, elder, or some other active Christian, who should establish Sabbath schools, and carry the gospel to every one of its families. It was a noble conception and worthy of the man. He was proceeding in this work with his characteristic ardor, and had already reported the erection of 222 churches, when his efforts were arrested by the rise of the non-

intrusion controversy. He found that he might be laboring to no purpose. He at once asked himself, Of what use will it be to multiply churches, if their spiritual and ecclesiastical affairs are to be governed, not by the New Testament, but by the arbitrary decisions of the Court of Session? He then looked to the Free Church. He had been obliged for conscience sake to abandon the Established Church and take the lead in organizing one which, receiving no emolument from the state, would be free to govern itself simply by the laws of the gospel. He had seen, if we mistake not, as many as 700 churches erected for the ministers of that Church, yet these were but sparsely scattered over the moral waste, and probably their faith and zeal and hope were far different from his. They were so much engaged in reorganizing their churches, and settling down to their former positions, and having everything according to the immemorial usages of the Kirk of Scotland, that they in some degree forgot their character as ministers of what Dr. Chalmers gloried in considering a missionary church. Besides, if an outsider might be permitted to hazard an opinion, he had greatly erred in the principles which lay at the foundation of the sustentation fund. It was so managed that a minister might look to that for his support, instead of relying on his efforts, by the aid of the Spirit, to bring under

the influences of the gospel the impenitent around him.

What then was Dr. Chalmers to do? To the public and executive labors which he had thus far performed he felt himself wholly unequal. The great object of his life had not been realized, nor did he perceive those tendencies in operation which would insure its accomplishment. The gospel for all the families of Scotland had been the motto of his life. He could no more surrender it than he could cease to exist. If his general efforts, though apparently successful, had not accomplished all that he expected, was he to give up the work in despair? That was not the nature of the man. To this object he had devoted his life, and he must labor at it till death. He at once looked at the subject from an opposite point of view. What could not be done in the mass, might be done in detail. Though he could not work a reformation in the whole of Scotland, he might, by the grace of God, do it for a particular and definite portion. He could thus show what the gospel could do, if brought home in love and faith to the hearts of individual men. The Christian world would then see what a power it held in its hands, and might also learn the means by which this power is to be exerted. He was thus brought, in consequence of his past disappointments, to adopt the very rule which the Saviour

has made known for the extension of the cause of Christ: "*The kingdom of heaven is like leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened.*" We know the nature of this process. Each atom of leaven is brought into contact with a particle of unleavened meal. This last becomes leavened, and it affects the atom next it, and thus onward, until the whole mass becomes leavened. Preaching is good, but it may be so performed that but a small portion of the masses ever hear it; so that few of those who hear understand it; and of those who understand it, a still smaller portion ever dream of being influenced by its utterances, if indeed its utterances be of such a nature as clearly to tend to any practical result. It is when the minister simply and earnestly tells men of their danger, and urges them in penitence and faith to accept of the offers of the gospel, and carries his message to individuals at their homes, and when each of his brethren, following his example, leavens the mass immediately around him, that the power of the gospel is manifested. If the church of Christ acted everywhere on this principle, the kingdoms of this world would soon become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.

Dr. Chalmers determined at once his mode of action. Writing to a friend on this subject, he says, "Indulge me if I feel encouraged to state

the grievous spiritual destitution of the thousands and tens of thousands in all our large towns who are utter strangers to all the habitual decencies of a Christian land. I could not in my own individual strength, even though aided by the means and energies of all my acquaintances, ever think of coping with this enormous evil *en masse*, or in all its magnitude and entireness. I feel very confident as to the likeliest steps by which, piecemeal and successively, the whole even of this great and growing evil might be overtaken. But the most that I can personally undertake to do is, to work off one model or normal specimen of the process by which a single locality might be reclaimed from this vast and desolate wilderness; and after the confirmation of my views by a made-out experience of this sort, pressing it on the imitation of all other philanthropists of all other localities, — such do I hold to be the efficiency of the method, with the divine blessing, that perhaps, as the concluding act of my public life, I shall make the effort to exemplify what as yet I have only expounded. I attach to this enterprise so much importance, that now I have done all I can for the Free Church at large, I mean to give up all general business, and with God's help will devote my remaining strength to the special object which I have now explained."

Preparatory to the commencement of this effort,

he delivered four public lectures in Edinburgh, in which, with all the freshness of his youthful days, he explained the principles on which he intended to proceed, and especially urged the importance of building a place of worship for each degraded district. But as the church must of necessity belong to some one denomination, and as under his care it would naturally belong to the Free Church, it might seem to some that he was merely laboring to promote the extension of the sect with which he was so intimately connected. It was on this occasion that, rising far above the petty distinction of rival denominations, he uttered with the most fervid eloquence these memorable words: "Who cares for the Free Church compared with the Christian good of the people of Scotland? Who cares about any church but as an instrument of Christian good? for be assured, that the moral and religious well-being of the population is of infinitely higher importance than the advancement of any sect." It were well if these sentiments were adopted by every disciple of Christ.

Dr. Chalmers proceeded to select a portion of Edinburgh, which should present the most decisive evidence of the truth or falsehood of his theory, and the practicableness of his plans of reform. Some years since the whole civilized world was startled by the discovery of a kind of atrocity in

Edinburgh that had never before been heard of. A miscreant by the name of Burk, with one or two associates, had been in the habit of alluring to their den vagrants, whom they first intoxicated and then murdered, and whose bodies they then sold to surgeons for dissection. A crime so unheard of, thrilled the land with horror, and marked out the district in which they were committed as the opprobrium of Christendom. By an accurate survey, it was found that the main street and its adjoining wynds contained 411 families; of which 45 were attached to some Christian communion, 70 were Roman Catholics, and 296 had no connection with any church whatever. Out of a gross population of 2,000, three-fourths of the whole, or about 1,500 of the inhabitants, were living within the sound of many a Sabbath bell, and, with an abundance of contiguous church accommodation were lost to all the habits and all the decencies of a Christian life. In these families the number of children capable of attending school was only 411, and of these 290 were growing up altogether untaught. The physical and moral condition of this community was deplorable; one-fourth were paupers on the poor roll, and one-fourth were street beggars, thieves, and prostitutes. When Mr. Tasker, who was afterwards their minister, made his first visits to some of the filthiest closes (alleys), it was no uncommon thing

for him to find from twenty to thirty men, women, and children huddled together in one putrid dwelling, lying indiscriminately on the floor, waiting for the return of the bearer of some well-concocted begging letter, or the coming on of that darkness under which they might easily sally out to earn the purchase-money of renewed debauchery. On one occasion he entered a tenement with from twelve to twenty apartments, where every man and woman were so drunk that they could not hear their own squalid children crying in vain to them for food. He purchased some bread for the children, and entering a few minutes after a neighboring dram-shop, he found a half-drunk mother driving a bargain for more whiskey, with the very bread which her famishing children should have eaten. He went once to a funeral and found the assembled company all so drunk around the corpse that he had to go and beg some sober neighbors to come and carry the coffin to the grave. These were extreme cases, indicative, however, of a deep and general moral corruption. This was the West Port; the district which Dr. Chalmers selected as the place in which he might display to Christian people the efficacy of the gospel of Christ.

It was indeed a formidable enterprise; to many it would have seemed altogether hopeless, to come into close quarters with such a population. Aid-

ed, however, by that band of zealous associates which his public lectures, and the many private interviews by which they were followed up, had gathered around him, he went hopefully forward.

The plan of operations laid down by him was sufficiently simple, but it needed zeal, regularity, and devoted perseverence to carry it into execution.

The West Port was divided into twenty districts, containing each about twenty families. Over each of these districts a visitor was appointed, whose duty it was to visit once a week all the families committed to his care, by all such attention and services as he could offer to win their good-will and by reading the Scriptures, and distributing tracts, by entering into conversation, and by engaging in prayer, to promote, as fit openings were given, their spiritual welfare. A printed slip drawn up by Dr. Chalmers was to be left in every house by each visitor, explaining the object of his present and future calls. The purpose of the visitor is thus explained. He declares that his main reason for visiting them, and what he chiefly seeks after, is the good of never-dying souls, and that he feels it to be his duty to seek for the good of theirs; that the rich and the poor are too widely separated, and he desires by kind offices to render them more acquainted with each other; that he desires the education of their families, and that a

good school will soon be opened for their children, and as the gospel is needed for all, a church for their own use will soon be erected among them, and Sunday schools on Sunday evenings established for them and their children; and, lastly, that in this work for their good he expects them to be co-workers with him, and that those who do not need his aid will unite with him in extending aid to others.

The arrangements were thus made, the visitors engaged, the districts defined, and the work of visiting commenced. Which department of this multiform and varied aggregation of wickedness and pollution should be attacked first? for Dr. Chalmers intended in the course of his labors to attack it all, and render the reformation thorough. As the demand for education precedes that for spiritual instruction, he determined as a first step to open a school somewhere in the West Port, and the visitors were advised to pay particular attention to the children, and to persuade the parents to send their children to the school which would ere long be opened in some convenient place.

In the prosecution of this plan there were *two points* to which he attached special importance. *To protect the purity of the enterprise*, he was most anxious that his *agents should not become almoners*, and should dispense as little money as possible among the poor. In illustration of his views,

he related his own experience. When he undertook his visitation of the Tron parish, he at once plunged into the regions where wretchedness and misery abounded. What surprised him most was the apparent interest and cordiality with which he was received. There was even a competition for him, each one wanting him to come to their own house. "But I soon found," says he, "that I was thought to have great influence in the city charities, and I found that this was the subject which they constantly broached, whenever they got me into their houses. I saw that this would vitiate my influence among them. I saw that it would never do if I were to go among them first as a dispenser of temporal good things, and then as urging upon them the things which make for their everlasting peace. I felt the want of compatibility between the two objects, and I determined to cut my connection with them all. I let the people understand that I dealt only in one article, and that if they valued the advantages of Christian instruction, they were welcome to all that I could do for them. Thus I disabused them of the notion that I had an inexhaustible treasury to dispose of, and, if it was necessary, let them know that if I did anything pecuniarily for them, it must be at my own expense, and I was not very rich. The effect of this frankness between me and the people was,

that, if there was any difference, they received me more cordially than ever."

Dr. Chalmers carried this principle throughout with unflinching tenacity of purpose. He said, "Besides, I had an elder, a person of great benevolence, but not so discriminating in this respect as I should have liked. When I instituted the Sabbath-school system, it was reported to me that he was devising, and had gone a considerable length in forming a local Sabbath-school clothing society, for the parish of St. Johns. 'Sir,' said I to him, 'your society will blast our Sabbath-school enterprise. I wish to have 1,200 scholars; do you mean to clothe all these?' 'No,' said he, 'only the most necessitous.' 'Well,' said I, 'but all these will wait their turn to be clothed, and we shall get no more than a fraction. My object is that they should come with the clothes they have on; so do not embarrass us with your society.' I accordingly got the society knocked on the head. You may go forth with perfect safety, having this inscription on the front of your enterprise, *Education for all;* but what would be the effect if you were to go forth with this inscription, *Money or meat for all.* If you go forth with that inscription, it will require but little effort on the part of the people, by a trifle more of dissipation or of indolence, to qualify themselves for relief in that way."

In the *second place*, he was strenuously opposed to the proposition to *make the education gratuitous*. "I do not think," said he to his visitors, "that you will accomplish any permanent good for the population, unless you enlist them as fellow-workers in, or at least as fellow-contributors to, the cause. I think that the great and radical error in the management of our population has just proceeded from the idea, that they are utterly helpless and unable to do anything for themselves. I want to train up the families in the sentiment that education is worth its price, and win them to the paying of that price. I am unfriendly to gratuitous education, nor do I wish that any of our agents or the people themselves shall, in the imagination of our indefinite resources, look for any relaxation of this system. The lesson which I am continually giving out is, that we shall not be able to do aught which is permanently effectual for the people's good, unless they will lend a hand, and do something for themselves."

Dr. Chalmers held his first regular meeting with his agents in Portsburgh Hall, an old court-house within the bounds of the West Port, on Saturday evening, July 27, 1844. Having made their weekly round among the families, the visitors were to assemble here every Saturday evening, to give in their reports, and to converse together about the most effectual method of carrying on the enterprise

upon which they had fairly embarked. At these meetings Dr. Chalmers presided, and when prevented by illness from attending, he addressed notes to the chairman. In these he expresses his interest in the object as greater than even in that of the general church committees, and declares that he never can abandon it until obliged by absolute necessity. He asks to see the minutes made during his necessary absence, and on reading them expresses his joy at the progressive liking which they feel for the families of their respective districts.

The time had now arrived for the opening of a school. But where was a room to be obtained? The only place which could be secured was one at the end of the very close down which Burk and his associates had dragged their unconscious victims. Fronting that close, in which those horrid murders had been committed, stood an old deserted tannery, whose upper store loft, approached from without by a flight of projecting wooden stairs, was selected as affording the best accommodation that the neighborhood could supply. Low-roofed and roughly-floored, its raw, unplastered walls, pierced at irregular intervals with windows of unshapely form, it had little either of the scholastic or ecclesiastical in its aspect; but never was the true work of the school or the church done better than in that old tannery-loft of the West Port.

Dr. Chalmers invited all the inhabitants of the neighborhood to meet him there, on Wednesday, Nov. 6. By this time the frequent calls of the visitors had awakened a general curiosity, and the invitation was accepted, the loft presenting a larger assembly of what he called genuine West Porters than he had met together for many years. Acting upon the saying of Talleyrand, that "there is nothing formidable in meeting with the very lowest of the people, if you only treat them frankly," Dr. Chalmers told them all that he and his friends intended to do for them, and what he expected them to do for themselves. He told them, in homely but vigorous terms, that a school was to be opened for their children, and that one of the best teachers in the country had been obtained for it, but that they must pay two pence a week for each child's education; that the article they were to be supplied with was worth a great deal more than that, and that they were quite able, and he was sure would be quite willing, to pay that much for it. The audience were quite delighted with the address, and quite persuaded that they both should and could do all that was required.

The school was opened with 64 day scholars and 57 evening scholars, Nov. 11th, 1844, and in the course of a single year no fewer than 250 were in attendance, and chiefly from West Port.

The educational part of the process having been

thus fairly set agoing, the higher and more difficult operation of bringing the adult part of the population under regular spiritual instruction was commenced. On the forenoon of Sabbath, Dec. 22d, Dr. Chalmers opened the tannery-loft for public worship. In the evening, however, when the city missionary preached, the whole fruit of all the visits, advices, and entreaties, that had been lavished upon them, was an audience of about a dozen adults, mostly old women. The prospect was sufficiently discouraging. The services were, however, regularly continued thrice in each Sabbath, and the private agencies were renewed. In April, 1845, Dr. Chalmers was so fortunate as to secure the services of Rev. Mr. Tasker, a gentleman eminently fitted for the station; the attendance grew under his ministry, and at the close of the year the nucleus of a good congregation began to appear.

The scheme, however, was obviously working at a disadvantage so long as an apartment so difficult of access, and so rudely fitted up, formed at once the school-room and the church. Ground therefore was purchased, and all other needful steps taken, for the erection, within the West Port, of a church and a school-room. Meanwhile, under the zealous ministry of Mr. Tasker, and with the aid of those ladies and gentlemen who, with the utmost devotedness, gave themselves to the work,

all the different operations which the good of the population required were carried on: a library, a savings bank, a washing house, and a female industrial school, were all established and all succeeded. Dr. Chalmers preached frequently in the loft, addressed several meetings of the inhabitants, to explain to them the different parts of the scheme as they were successively instituted, presided at many of the agents' meetings, and was in fact the central spring that set the whole machinery in motion.

There may have been other works of his hands on which a larger amount of labor was bestowed, but there was none over which so many prayers were offered. In his "Horæ Sabbaticæ," in which on the Sabbath day he utters the deepest feelings of his soul, he frequently makes mention of the work at West Port as one of those which laid nearest to his heart. His prayers for this object are such as these: "Moving fearlessly onward, may I obtain such possession of the West Port as that the gospel of Jesus Christ shall have the moral ascendency over a goodly number of its families. Let me not forget the conquests of thine all-subduing grace, and the preservations of thy faithful servants in the history of the missions of other days. And in this, as well as in other work, let it be my care to follow thee fully; neither let me go up thither unless thy presence and favor go along with me.

We would give thee no rest until thou hast opened the windows of heaven and caused righteousness to run down that street like a mighty river; and let such a memorial of Christian philanthropy be set up in that place, as to be a praise and example both in the city of our habitation, and in the other cities of our land."

Again, "O my God, give me the power of ordering matters aright in the West Port; let all be peace and harmony, and no confusion there. Direct all my footsteps in that undertaking, and may I more and more be made to abound in such suggestions as thy Spirit will prompt and approve of. Let me keep all the impulses of my own spirit under the subjection of a presiding and circumspect wisdom. And more especially, O God, let me understand thy will in regard to the right plan and performances of a female agency. May their work be abundantly blessed and countenanced from on high, and have a happy effect on the families. Let me beware of mine being too much of a restraining authority, and let me seek that all things be done to edification, and all things be done decently and in order."

Again, "Bestow upon me in larger measure and proportion the grace which thou didst so plentifully bestow upon the churches of Macedonia. Let it spread abroad more and more among the sadly deficient congregations of our Free Church. Do thou

begin it even now among the families of the West Port. Make them willing in the day of thy power, that abounding in all that is good, they may abound in this grace also. It is still but a day of small things; Oh, do thou brighten it onward even until the latter-day glory. Cause the poorest to take part in the fellowship of Christian charity."

Again, "And I pray not for myself alone, but for him that labors in holy things among the families of the West Port. Prosper, O Lord, his meditations on thy holy Word. Let me ever rejoice in the endowments which thou hast pleased to bestow upon him; do thou guide and encourage him, O Lord. May he be enabled to wait upon thee without distraction, and let him so minister that not only his own profiting, but the profiting of those under his charge, may appear unto all. Oh, may he not only be saved himself, but may he be the instrument of salvation to many, and may both he and I be carried in safety and at length with triumph to that prosperous consummation for which we are jointly laboring."

These Christian efforts from time to time produced a gradually increasing effect. As the results began more visibly to appear, the efforts of Christian friends were redoubled. Dr. Chalmers was supplied not only with funds to build a church and a school-room, but to purchase and fit up a tenement of houses as model-houses for working-men,

in which, at a low rent, additional means of cleanliness and comfort were enjoyed. He could begin to appeal to what had already been done, to manifest what could be accomplished in other places by the use of the same means. "If," said he, "the hundreds of Christian philanthropists in Edinburgh and Glasgow, and the thousands in London, were, in little separate bands, to select their respective localities, and do the same thing, a single decade of years might not pass away without our being landed in the blessed result of a better and happier generation."

At last, on the 19th of February, 1847, the West Port church was opened for public worship by Dr. Chalmers, and on the 25th of April he presided at the first sacrament administered within its walls. On the following Monday, he said to Mr. Tasker, "I have now got the desire of my heart. The church is finished, the schools are flourishing, our ecclesiastical machinery is about complete, and all in good working order. *God has indeed heard my prayer, and I could now lay down my head and die in peace.*" On the next day he wrote to Mr. Lennox, of New York, as follows: "I wish to communicate to you what to me is the most joyful event of my life. I have been intent for thirty years on the completion of a territorial experiment, and I have now to bless God for the consummation of it. Our church was opened on

the 19th of February, and in one month my anxieties respecting an attendance have been set at rest. Five-sixths of the sittings have been let, but the best part of it is, that three-fourths of these are from the West Port, a locality which two years ago had not one in ten church-goers from the whole population. I presided there on Sabbath last over its first sacrament. There were 132 communicants, and 100 of them were from the West Port."

Scarcely two years had elapsed, and yet how great was the transformation! When the work began, the number attending all the places of worship did not exceed one-eighth of the whole population. In the new church, 300 sittings were taken as soon as it was opened, and 100 were admitted to the first communion. When the work began, of those capable of education three-fourths were not at school; already, the ratio had been reversed, and three-fourths were in regular attendance. Many of these children were of the poorest class, yet school-fees, amounting in the aggregate to upward of £70 per annum, had been cheerfully and gratefully paid by their parents. The change was beginning to show itself in the outward appearance of the inhabitants. He says, "We have no recollection of anything so sudden as the transition in the aspect of these girls, from the time of their first raggedness as they were found running

about the streets in that destitute locality, to the personal cleanliness and respectability which they now exhibit. Their appearance, indeed, is altogether delightful. The boys have not made so large an advance as the girls; but altogether the schools present a most attractive and delightful spectacle. When we recollect that these poor people have all the capacities of human spirits, that they have talents, that they have imperishable souls, that they are on a full level of equality with ourselves in all that is essential to man, and that we have nothing to do but to go and do them justice, and to give up the shameful neglect which we have indulged toward the lower classes for half a century, — I would say for almost a whole century, — it is not to be told to what a height of advancement morally, intellectually, and economically they are capable of being raised, even in the present generation."

This opening of the church at West Port, and the administration of the communion there, were among Dr. Chalmers's last public acts. The communion was in April; on the 30th of the following May he was called to receive his reward. God permitted him to witness the commencement of the realization of his fondest hopes. He saw this disgusting wilderness beginning to blossom like the rose, and fruit first appearing from the seed which he had sown with many tears and prayers; and having seen this he fell asleep.

There were some who not unnaturally feared that his removal would be fatal to the success of this great moral experiment which he had originated, and with such self-denying effort labored to carry to completion. But it was not so. After five years, under the admirable management of Mr. Tasker, each year has witnessed an advancing progress. In its educational department the work is complete. In the different male and female day and evening schools, between 400 and 500 children are in attendance; nor is it known *that there is a single child of a family resident within the West Port that is not at school.* Of what other like district in this country could the same be said, and by what other instrumentality could it have been accomplished? It was the district-visiting, and the zeal especially of those ladies by whom a special oversight of the children's regular attendance at school was undertaken, by which this great achievement has been mainly accomplished. The habit of church attendance has become as general and regular within *the West Port as it is in the best conditioned districts of Edinburgh.* The church is filled to overflowing; and while these pages (the Memoir by Dr. Hanna) are going through the press, the people of the West Port, who among themselves contributed no less than £100 for the building of this church at first, are contributing at an equal rate

for the erection of a gallery. During the last year, besides meeting all the expenses necessary for the support of Christian ordinances, amounting to nearly £250 ($1,200), the West Port congregation has contributed £70 ($336) to missionary and educational objects.

At the same cost, adds Dr. Hanna, among the same class, within the same limits, and during the same time, there never have been accomplished, in this or any other land, anything like the same educational and spiritual results. It stands the only instance in which the depth of city ignorance and vice have been sounded to the very bottom; nor can the possibility of cleaning the foul basement story of our social edifice be doubted any longer. How the spirit of the departed would have rejoiced had he lived to witness what the West Port now presents, and how gladly would he have hailed every token that the lessons given forth thereby were not likely to be lost. We know how willingly he would have seen every other thought of his heart and every other work of his hands perish from the remembrance of his fellows, if only the guiding light were followed, which this example furnished, as the best method of raising the sunken millions of our fellow-countrymen to a higher level of character and comfort on earth, and preparing them for glory, honor, and immortality hereafter.

CHAPTER X.

PERSONAL CHARACTER — DEATH.

HAVING thus briefly related some of the most important facts in Dr. Chalmers's history, it seems proper, in conclusion, to present some of the traits of his personal character.

Of the intellectual gifts of Dr. Chalmers it is needless here to speak. There are few writers of the age whose productions are so voluminous, or on a greater variety of subjects, or so universally read and admired. In early life, he was highly distinguished for his love of the mathematics, and his successful prosecution of them. His attainments in all the branches of natural philosophy, especially of chemistry, were equally remarkable. As we have seen, he lectured on mathematics and chemistry at St. Andrews with high reputation when quite a young man, while minister in Kilmany. Indeed, his mind seemed to turn in obedience to his will to any subject that presented itself, and it grasped almost every subject with equal success, — one of the surest evidences of the highest type of human genius.

One of the most remarkable of the elements of his character was what I may perhaps denominate a universal and tenderly susceptible sympathy with everything that lives. He loved nature in all her aspects with intense affection, and he seemed to become almost a part of everything he loved. "It is," said he once, "a curious faculty that I have of magnifying things. Now I find no difficulty in looking at this," a little tuft of tree-moss which he held in his hand, "as if I were an animalcule living there within it, and these little fibres a great pine forest with fine green mounds in it." As we may suppose, his love of scenery was intense; from the least to the greatest it all delighted and excited him. In his garden he took great pleasure, noticing every change with almost the freshness and pleasure of a child. Coming into the house one day, he said to his daughters, "It's a noble instrument, a garden. I have just counted all the things in flower in all the walks, and there are just 320." He was always the first to bring in the first snowdrop of the season, of which flower he was passionately fond. The writer well remembers walking with him through the Edinburgh Botanical Garden, and the earnestness with which he expatiated on the peculiar beauty or the remarkable physical peculiarities of the most noteworthy plants that came within our view.

But it was the scenery of England and Scotland in which he particularly revelled. His vacations were generally spent in travelling, and in his journeys he selected not the most direct but the most picturesque routes. On one of his excursions he said to a friend that he intended to accomplish the resolution which he had formed, of taking a view of the country from the steeple of every cathedral in England. The views remarkable for beauty or sublimity which came within his reach he sought after without regard to fatigue, or any form of personal annoyance. And it was his habit to find out every spot of singular beauty in the vicinity of his residence, and he could never be at ease until he had led his visitors from abroad to admire the scenery in which he took so much delight. And what is the more to be remarked, these scenes which he gazed upon with absorbing delight seemed engraved on his recollection forever. The effect of this habit is very manifest in his style. It furnished him with unlimited richness of illustration, and enlivened every description of nature with a graphic vividness which is rarely to be found in the same degree in any other writer. His hearers seem unconsciously to be transported to the very scene which he describes; they see with his eyes, they hear with his ears, and they sympathize with him in the intense emotion which seemed almost to overmaster him.

Those who are familiar with his works will readily remember the vivid and life-like character which this peculiarity impresses upon several of his finest passages.

But this mysterious element of sympathy was exhibited in its greatest power in his relations with humanity. His love for man was intense, and he felt that every human being was his brother. Wherever he happened to be visiting, his attention was always directed to the children. He was the playmate of his own children, and not unfrequently was found by his visitors romping with them like one of their playmates. He felt himself one with all the thousands of outcasts with whom he became acquainted in his pastoral visitations. In them he saw the degraded masses throughout his native country, and he imposed upon himself the labor of attempting to elevate and renew them with a self-devotion that ended only with his life. This moved him to his labors at Kilmany. It increased in power, as with his own eyes he beheld the misery which festered in the Tron parish and in St. Johns. This established the Sabbath school in St. Andrews, and stimulated him to those labors which led to so glorious a result. It was the hope of filling Scotland with Christian institutions that strengthened him to labor until he saw 222 churches erected for the Establishment. In the hope that the Free Church would accomplish this

object, even in declining health he again put on the harness, and did not lay it aside until he had been the means of building 600 churches for its accommodation. When he feared that the wish of his heart would not be accomplished through this latter agency, aged and feeble, but with unchanged love for the fallen and degraded, if he could not move the whole country, he resolved to show what might be done by one example, and he commenced his great missionary work at the West Port. In its filthy alleys and dirty workshops he spoke to these degraded men and women, with an outpouring love and a tender earnestness, with which not even his most admired efforts at the Tron Church and St. Johns could be compared.

But his love and sympathy for man was unlimited. He labored with every class and for every class, and many of his intimate friends were among the most distinguished men of the realm. In Glasgow, in Edinburgh, and in London his congregations were in a large part composed of the most eminent men in the various departments of literary and social life. Men of science, men of learning, statesmen, lawyers, millionaires, when they came within the sound of his voice, yielded at once to the spell of his wonderful eloquence. They felt themselves at one with the speaker; his spirit seemed to commune with theirs and to sway them all at his single will. The whole audience seemed

to feel as one man, and, as they retired from the sound of his voice, felt conscious that they, for the time at least, were formed after the model of this wonderful orator.

As a public speaker he owed nothing to personal appearance. He was of the ordinary height, and rather strongly if not heavily built. His eye was commonly dull and frequently dreamy; but when engaged in earnest speaking "it was lighted up to a glow." His gestures were awkward and his action not graceful. His pronunciation was so broadly Scottish, that an American, until several sentences had been spoken, could not fully understand him. The tones of his voice must have been perfect almost beyond example. Rich, varied, flexible, of vast compass, they clothed the burning thoughts of the speaker with such an utterance as conveyed to the hearer every shade of feeling with which he himself was agitated. The tenderness of pity, the scoff of contempt, the disgust at meanness, the buoyancy of hope, and the shudder of despair, thus penetrated the heart of every hearer, and rung in his ears for weeks after the occasion had passed away.

With feelings so strong and excitability so acute, it could hardly be expected that he should not be easily moved. Falsehood, treachery, hypocrisy, and selfishness, instantly startled him, and he became sternly indignant. It was, however, but for

a moment. Benevolence soon drowned his anger forever, and he was perhaps the first to make excuses for the offenders, and join in the laugh which his excitement had occasioned. While he was one day very busily engaged in his study, a man entered, who at once propitiated him, under the perplexity of an unexpected interruption, by telling him that he called under great distress of mind. "Sit down, sir; be good enough to be seated," said Dr. Chalmers, turning eagerly and full of interest from his writing-table. The visitor explained to him that he was troubled with doubts about the divine origin of the Christian religion, and being kindly questioned as to the nature of his doubts, he gave among other difficulties what is said in the Bible about Melchisedec being without father, without mother, etc. Patiently and anxiously Dr. Chalmers sought to clear away every successive difficulty as it was stated. Expressing himself greatly relieved in mind, and imagining that he had gained his end, "Doctor," said the visitor, "I am in great need of a little money at present, and perhaps you could help me in that way." At once the object of the visit was seen, and a perfect tornado of indignation burst upon the deceiver, driving him in very quick retreat from the study to the street door, these words escaping, among others: "Not a penny, sir; not a penny. It

is too bad, it is too bad ; and to haul in your hypocrisy upon the shoulders of Melchisedec ! "

A similar incident occurred in the latter part of his life, when he was told that it was objected by some minister, that if many churches like that at West Port were erected, it might draw away some hearers from the existing Edinburgh ministers. It created a storm of indignation. " And for the sake," said he, " of those that would drop from this and that man's congregation, am I to let the masses live in dirt and die in darkness ? Horrible ! to make a rabbit-warren of human souls. Can that man believe what he preaches, who would stand by and see hundreds sink into an unprepared eternity, rather than run the risk of Mr. John This (spoken with an ironical drawl) or Mr. James That being lost to his congregation. There is a vast deal of spurious faith, and I see more and more the meaning of the Saviour's question, 'When the Son of Man cometh shall he find faith on the earth ?' "

In reading his " Horæ Sabbaticæ" and his journals, one would be led to suspect that Dr. Chalmers was a full feeder, or that he was in the habit of indulging in the luxuries of the table. This, however, was not the fact; he was, on the contrary, remarkably abstemious. His self-condemnations had respect to the rule which he had formed for himself, and not to the actual fact. Every incapacity

for intellectual effort or spiritual exercise, he was disposed to attribute to an excess in eating, which it was his duty to subdue. Thus, one night after supper, at Merchistown Castle, he enters in his journal, "Exceeded to-night at supper." The fact really was, that at supper a water biscuit, thin as a wafer, but of large circumference, was put upon the plate before him. As he got into an animated conversation he continued breaking down this biscuit into small parts and eating them. When he discovered that the biscuit was all consumed he expressed himself surprised and shocked, though this was all that he had partaken of, and when he retired made the entry in his journal to which we have alluded.

The habits of Dr. Chalmers, so far as intellectual labor was concerned, were peculiar, and in many respects worthy of profound reflection. In the first place, he adhered inflexibly to the rule, *nulla dies sine linea, — compose something every day.* Except during the first winter at St. Andrews, he never exceeded two or three hours at a sitting in severe composition, and there was seldom more than one sitting in the course of the day. The tension of his mind during the effort was extreme, but it was never so long continued as to induce fatigue or exhaustion. During the last six or seven years of his life, his daily modicum of original composition was completed before breakfast, and

all done in bed. The preparatory ruminating or excogitating process was slow, but it was complete. "I have often fancied," he once said, "that in one respect I resembled Rousseau, who says of himself that his processes of thought were *slow* but *ardent*," —a curious and rare combination. In proportion, however, to the slowness with which his conclusions were reached, was the firmness with which they were riveted. Hence, with the exception of the change in his religious sentiments in the early part of his ministry at Kilmany, though he has been often accused of inconsistency, there is not one of his published or formally expressed opinions that he had ever occasion to alter. This slow and deliberate habit of thinking gave him great advantage when the act of composition came to be performed. He had never the double task to do, at once of thinking what he should say, and then how he should say it. The one was over before the other commenced. He never began to write till in its subjects, and the order and proportion of its parts, the map or outline of the future composition was laid down; and this was done so distinctly, and, as it were, authoritatively, that it was seldom violated. When engaged, therefore, in writing, his whole undivided strength was given to the best and most powerful expression of preëstablished ideas. In a word, he never wrote a sermon or delivered a speech for which he had not deliberately,

and as perfectly as he could, prepared a skeleton of the thought. When this had been finished, the work of preparation was, for the best part, done.

It deserves, also, to be remarked, that in thus writing out his thoughts, either for the pulpit or the press, he most commonly employed short-hand. He could read it himself with the utmost ease, and it was, we presume, in the case of writing for the press, transcribed for him by others. By this means he was able to do more in the same amount of time than other men, and could, with less delay, transfer to the page the burning thoughts with which his whole soul was impassioned.

In this careful preparation, in doing all the work of thinking before the writing was commenced, he took the only method by which good composition can be produced. It is also probably true, that he acted wisely in allotting fewer hours in a day to earnest intellectual work than are commonly employed by men of similar pursuits. Yet he was one of the most voluminous writers of his time, and one of the most effective. He did more and better with his two or three hours a day, than men who give up to solid mental occupation ten, twelve, or fourteen hours daily. Though he had several attacks of illness, yet he was never an habitual invalid. This surely indicates that he was obeying the physical laws of his being. The brain can labor vigorously at original

work but few hours at a time. It is better to seize these then, and to vigorously employ them, than to pore over work in dogged resolution. In general, we may be assured that hard writing becomes hard reading and hard hearing. A remark which he makes in connection with this subject is worth remembering, and we have never met with it elsewhere. "I find," he says, "that successful exertion is a powerful means of exhilaration, which discharges itself in good humor upon others." His own morning compositions seldom failed in this effect, as he came forth from them beaming and buoyant, with a step as springing as that of childhood, and a spirit overflowing with benignity. Although the solid work of the day was over, his occupation was not gone. The time which remained was devoted to Biblical readings, to the improvement of his theological lectures, to reading the best English authors, to correspondence, to hospitality, to intercourse with his family, and to those labors of philanthropy in which he was so deeply interested.

With all his social cheerfulness and beaming joy, there were tokens not a few of an internal conflict, glimpses of an inward desolation which told unmistakably, that, like David, he felt himself to be a stranger on this earth. "I would not live always" was a sentence which he often uttered. "What a wilderness this world is to the heart, with

all it has to inspire happiness. I am more conversant with principles than with persons. I begin to suspect that the intensity of my own pursuits has isolated me from living men, and that there is a want of amalgamation about me which cements the companionships and closer brotherhoods that obtain in society. I have a great and growing sense of desolation. These are perhaps the feelings which arise in advanced life from the necessity of the case, and belong to a mind of originality and independence, and from that sense of responsibility which withdraws instinctively from all ambiguous or useless associations." He adds, "What a marvellous solitude every man bears about him; and then that other and mysterious seclusion, the intervening veil between us and the Deity. You would think," speaking in a hesitating tone, "that he would delight to manifest himself to his creatures. No doubt the obstacle is in the subjective; the clearer the reflecting medium the brighter the manifestation. That is strikingly put in Matthew. The *pure in heart shall see God.* I look upon it as a strong proof of our alienation from God; for how short a time we can sustain a direct contemplation of him; what a mighty transformation, when the veil of outer things shall be withdrawn, and we stand naked and alone before him with whom we have to do!"

"During the summer before his death, Dr. Chalmers visited Jedburgh, where there had occurred lately a somewhat remarkable revival of religion. He spent several days in the village, principally in company with its pastor, Rev. Mr. Purves. Mr. P.'s account of these interviews presents one of the liveliest portraits of the inner life of Dr. Chalmers, and of its beaming forth in every form of Christian benignity, that we have ever met with. Though the extracts which we make from this letter are long, we think they will be read with interest.

"We have known much of him as an unrivalled orator; we now look upon him with a deeper interest as the loving disciple of the blessed Saviour. . . . .

"What struck me most in his deportment," says Mr. P., "was the patriarchal simplicity and parental benignity of character which everything he did and said so beautifully displayed. The genial and kindly interest he took in every one, the delicate attention he paid to all, even to the youngest child around him, the happy-heartedness he so obviously felt in the prosperity of the young ministers as he drew them out to state the circumstances in which they were placed, and the modesty and kindliness with which he dropped a word of advice or of encouragement to them, formed altogether one of the loveliest moral pictures I ever beheld.

"But to pass from the general features of his character, — what to me was especially worthy of note, was the spiritual light in which he presented himself. Some heard him lament that the circumstances in which he had been placed had always kept him in the outer court of the temple, and that the inner and more spiritual sphere he had rather looked forward to as a land of Beulah in the distance than one actually attained to and enjoyed. Whether this was the confession of mere humility alone, I have no means of knowing. But I will say, that of all the individuals or private Christians who have been here since there was a little quickening of the Spirit of God among the people, Dr. Chalmers showed by far the deepest interest in their spiritual state and history. It formed the staple of our discourse during the two happy days we spent together. He asked me to recount to him all the prominent cases of conversion which had come under my notice, and never seemed to weary in listening to such details as I could give him. Often and often would he break in on the little narratives with expressions of the highest delight, saying it had been his lifelong wish to breathe in a spiritual atmosphere, and that it was a kind of heaven upon earth to do so. Even before we left the pulpit, on the Sabbath when he preached for me, he remarked what a delight he had in preaching to and worshipping

with a people who had so much of the simple, solemn spirit of Christianity in their aspect; it was so different from the pressure and bustle and stare he had been so much accustomed to, and which was often so alien from true worship. I do not know how many persons he pointed out with whose countenances he had become arrested, and with whose history he begged to be made acquainted. With one of these persons he seemed to be specially taken, whose eye had never been removed from him for a single moment, and who remained riveted to her seat till every other member of the congregation had left the place. When informed that she was a kind of poor Joseph (imbecile), whose mind was weak on all points but religion, his interest in her was still more deepened. After I told him how, when the news of the disruption had reached the place, she had gone into a neighbor's house and with a face beaming with delight had said, 'Have you heard the good news? Man is to have no more rule in Christ's house; we are to have no other master now but himself,' he dwelt on it at the time, and afterward in our subsequent intercourse often reverted to it as one of the happiest sayings elicited by our controversy; adding it was one of the many proofs that while the prominent points of our controversy could by no act be made to penetrate the higher intellects of the land, they seemed to be instinctively and intu-

itively seized by those who, though simple, were taught by the Spirit of God.

"It was at his own request that, after we had seen the few antiquarian curiosities of the place, we spent the rest of the day in visiting as many of the people as possible who had lately, to all appearance, undergone a saving change of character. It was, unfortunately, at the season when their employments took them from home to the surrounding country, and as I was not to intimate our purpose, but to take them in their usual guise and occupations, it was somewhat difficult to accomplish our purpose. You can easily imagine also, that, as they know by report, and from hearing him on the preceding day, who the illustrious visitor was, the people in general were more disposed to listen than to speak. And what still more increased the difficulty of letting him see their every-day and spiritual being was the circumstance, that on its being known that he was in any house, neighbors, of a religious character at least, dropped in, whose presence somewhat damped the freedom of communication on Christian experimental subjects. Notwithstanding all these obstacles, we saw a considerable number of recent converts to more or less advantage; and I may particularly note one house, with the group that assembled, with which he seemed specially taken, as I know the people themselves were

struck with the singular outpouring in prayer with which of his own accord he closed the interview.

"The plan was, I was quietly and incidentally to draw the people into conversation which might show the inner being, without their being aware of the purpose, while he was simply to listen. It happened fortunately, in the case referred to, that I got next to a woman whose impressions of divine things were but recent, whose experiences also, both of sorrow and joy, had been so deep that she had found it nearly impossible to confine either to her own breast, and who was at this time laboring under that disease which a short time afterwards transmitted her spirit to glory, and which even then may have given her soul such a presentiment of her approaching end as to make her more free and communicative than others would have been. She accordingly, with great modesty and interest, in her own homely way, in answer to the questions which my knowledge of her previous history enabled me to put to her, gave the leading points of her change, her awakening to a sense of her lost condition, and the method in which God had brought her to a state of peace and joy in believing. Never shall I forget the scene which presented itself, when, near the close of the narrative, I turned round to see its effect upon our venerable father. The whole scene was such a one as a

painter would have liked to perpetuate. There were two beds running along one side of the apartment, on the edge of which ten or a dozen persons had, since the interview began, ranged themselves, including one of our humble elders, and several individuals who, during the two or three previous years, had been turned from darkness to light. The countenances of several of these, as they were lighted up with Christian sympathy, — one more especially, whose foreign and gipsy-like features, and fine black eyes swimming all the time in tears, — greatly arrested Dr. Chalmers, as he told me afterwards. But he himself was the most interesting object of all. The figure he presented was not a little grotesque, but profoundly affecting. He was himself in a corner of the apartment, facing the little group, but rather behind the woman and me. The person in whose house we were had been baking bread before we entered, and the table at the end of which he had placed himself was covered with meal. Not observing this, he had placed one elbow in the midst of it, and pulling out a drawer in an old wardrobe on the other side, on which to rest his other elbow, there he was, sitting in this posture, with a hand behind each ear to catch what was passing, and with a countenance so inexpressibly bland and benignant, on which the interest, sympathy, and delight of the good man's heart had cast such a

heavenly radiance, as I shall never forget while I live. He put several questions himself to the elder referred to, as to the former and present state of things; which, having been long in the place, he was able to answer, and did answer in a way which evidently deepened the interest already depicted on Dr. Chalmers's countenance. He then, as I have mentioned, of his own accord, engaged in prayer with and for the little group around him, like a father or one of the ancient patriarchs, commending them to the care and keeping of God Almighty. It was a wonderful outpouring, full of unction, compared with which even his eloquence was but tame. Indeed, the whole scene was one of uncommon interest. I felt at the time that, if circumstances had kept him in the *outer* court most of his life, all the man's likings, his deepest affections, his whole heart, were *within* the veil. He said to me, as we stepped out into the street, and he pressed my arm in his, 'That is one of the most interesting groups I ever beheld.' And I must say that, though I have seen him in many positions of the deepest interest, — in the pulpit, the professor's chair, the chair of the first Free Assembly, and, better than all, among his ragged children in the West Port, — I don't know but, now that the ripened spirit is removed to a more congenial world than this, my memory dwells with fonder delight on the picture

of the venerable man in this humble cottage than anywhere else it has been my lot to see him. There was more of character, and of the highest style of character, — Christian benevolence, spirituality, heavenliness, — displayed in that humble dwelling than I had ever seen anywhere else. His visit left a most happy and hallowed impression upon not only myself and those privileged to be in nearest contact with him, but I may say on the whole place; the benignity and goodness of the man eclipsed even his greatness, leaving such an odor behind as made one feel it was even 'as if an angel shook his wings.'"

Such was the heavenly state of mind which Dr. Chalmers enjoyed, when, having laid aside, for the most part, public labors, his soul took its natural direction, and he was permitted to realize his entrance into the land of Beulah, for which he had so long sighed.

Soon after the communion of the West Port Church, in April, 1847, he was obliged to go to London in order to give his evidence before a Parliamentary committee. He accomplished his object, saw several friends in London and vicinity, and on his return took occasion to visit his sister, Mrs. Morton. "It was," said his niece, "most delightful to watch his countenance. I never saw anything like the smiles that gleamed one after another over it. He looked so happy, so innocent,

so childlike, that one could hardly fancy him the person before whom men of the greatest intelle felt conscious of inferiority." Every day he read and prayed with Mrs. Morton in her own room. Taking her daughter aside on the last day he was at Whitfield, he took down the Bible, and said, "Come and look here." He then followed with his finger every word as he read the tenth verse of the fiftieth chapter of Isaiah. "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light, let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." "Now, I am sure you have the fear of the Lord before you, thus obeying his voice. It would be very delightful to see Jesus as he is, at the right hand of God; but all do not enjoy this; it is not given to all, but all may obey his voice. You obey that voice by honoring your father and mother, by attending to your household duties, and if at any time you be in darkness, see here what you have to do. You know that the name of a person is little compared with his presence, and yet the Lord bids you take his name, and lean upon it, and stay yourself upon it, and that will be enough for you." In his last prayer with them, he prayed that one and all of them might be shielded under the ample canopy of the Redeemer's righteousness; that every hour that struck, every day that dawned, every night that

darkened around them, might find them meeter for death and for the eternity that follows it; and that, when their earthly course was finished, they might meet and spend together a never-ending Sabbath in the bright abodes of purity and peace.

On the night of Friday, May 28, he arrived in Edinburgh, with no particular marks of fatigue or exhaustion. On the forenoon of Saturday, he was engaged in preparing a report for the General Assembly of the Free Church then in session. On Sunday he felt more the effects of fatigue, though he accompanied Dr. Cunningham to his place of worship at Morning Side. He spent the evening with his family, as usual, charming every one by his genial benignity. After supper, he said to a clergyman who happened to be staying with him, "You gave us worship in the morning; I am sorry to ask you again to give us worship in the evening." "Not at all," said he; "I shall be happy to do so." "Well," replied he, "you will give worship to-night, *and I expect to give worship to-morrow morning.*"

During the whole evening, as if he had kept his brightest smiles and fondest utterances to the last, and for his own, he was peculiarly bland and benignant. "I had seen him frequently," says Mr. Gemmel, "at Fairlie in his happiest moods, but I never saw him happier. Christian benevolence beamed from his countenance, sparkled in his eye,

and played upon his lips." Immediately after prayers he withdrew, and bidding his family remember that they must be early to-morrow, he waved his hand, saying, "A general good-night."

Next morning before eight o'clock, Professor McDougal, who lived in the house adjoining, sent to inquire about a package of papers which he had expected to receive at an earlier hour. The housekeeper, who had been long in the family, knocked at the door of Dr. Chalmers's room, but received no answer. Concluding that he was asleep, and unwilling to disturb him, she waited until another person called with a second message. She then entered the room; it was in darkness; she spoke, but received no response. At last she threw open the window-shutters and drew aside the curtains of the bed. He sat there, half erect, his head reclining gently on the pillow, the expression on his countenance that of fine and majestic repose. She took his hand, she touched his brow; he had been dead for hours; very shortly after that parting salute to his family, he had entered the eternal world. His departure must have been wholly without pain or conflict. The expression of the face, undisturbed by any trace of suffering, the position of the body, so easy that the least struggle would have disturbed it, the very posture of his arms, hands, and fingers, known to his family as that into which they fell naturally in moments of entire

repose, conspired to show that, saved all strife with the last enemy, his spirit had passed to its place of blessedness and glory in the heavens.

The funeral took place on Friday, June 4th. Never before, says the "Witness," did we behold such a funeral, — nay, never before in the memory of man, did Scotland witness such a funeral. It seemed as if all Edinburgh, nay, all Scotland, was in tears. It was a solemn tribute spontaneously paid to departed goodness and greatness by the public mind. "We are confident," says the writer, "we rather underestimate than exaggerate their numbers when we state that the spectators of the funeral must have rather exceeded than fallen short of a hundred thousand persons. There was a moral sublimity in the spectacle. It spoke more emphatically than by words of the dignity of intrinsic excellence, and the height to which a true man may attain. It was the dust of a Presbyterian minister that the coffin contained, and yet they were burying him amid the tears of a nation, and with more than kingly honors."

CHAPTER X.

CONCLUSION.

WE have completed the narrative of that portion of the life of Dr. Chalmers which was either strictly parochial or else devoted to direct labor for the extension of the kingdom of Christ. It may not be inopportune now to offer some suggestions which naturally arise from a review of the course of life which we have thus briefly presented. Such suggestions, though they might occur to every reader, may not be wholly useless; for our own reflections frequently impress themselves upon us more strongly when we find that they have also arisen in the minds of others.

Our acquaintance with Dr. Chalmers as a minister commenced with his ordination at Kilmany. He was then distinguished as a mathematician and a chemist, and a popular lecturer upon his favorite sciences. To these pursuits he gave the greater portion of his time, allotting only two days in the week to the labors of his parish. When it was made a matter of complaint that he was thus a pluralist, performing another service than that

which was really parochial, he boldly answered that he performed all his official duty; he supplied his pulpit, and visited his parish annually, according to the rules, and challenged comparison with any of his brethren. He considered his service merely professional, and that, if he did all that custom demanded, he might employ the remainder of his time as was most pleasing to himself. But a change came over him. By the Spirit of God, he was led to look upon time and eternity, sin and its condemnation, the helpless guilt of man and the way of salvation through Christ, the moral transformation wrought by the gospel and the eternal blessedness of the believer, as matters of solemn reality. They took full possession of his inmost soul. He gave himself up with his whole heart to realize in his own case that course of life which these truths indicate, and to make them known with all his powers to his dying fellow-men. He was assured that, though all men needed a knowledge of the truths of the gospel, those needed them most who were living in brutish ignorance and vice, the lowest class of the population, specially in large towns and cities. To these latter he consecrated himself with more than missionary devotion. He gave his whole life to the work of raising the masses of his countrymen to the level of respected and respectable citizens here, and to securing their preparedness, by a life of piety, for

blessed immortality hereafter. The entire week, instead of two days of it, was now too short for his labors at Kilmany, and afterwards, when he engaged in authorship, all his publications had respect to this noble undertaking, in some form or other.

When he was called to the Tron Church, the same idea animated him. He found himself possessed of an eloquence which thronged his church to overflowing, and placed him, by universal acknowledgment, at the head of the pulpit in Glasgow. But this did not satisfy him. He saw that his voice reached only those few who occupied the apex of the social cone. There were thousands all around him who had never heard of a Saviour, and who knew nothing either of sin or salvation. He at once plunged into the scenes of misery and vice in his parish, determined to grasp and measure for himself the depths of depravity which festered in the district over which he had been appointed a minister of Christ. Here, however, he found his efforts thwarted by municipal regulations which had grown hoary with age, and which tended to render all his labors ineffectual.

In the fulness of his unexampled popularity at the Tron Church, he resolved to enter a more unembarrassed field of labor. Forsaking all the endearments of an old, influential, and wealthy parish, he accepted the ministry of St. Johns, a

new church, situated in one of the poorest districts of Glasgow, where he could act without magisterial interference. His success here has been noticed in the preceding pages. His labors in this field, however, were largely directed to the *removal of pauperism*, and he endeavored to show that the metropolitan plan of charity had no effect, except to increase the evils which it was intended to remedy. While thus engaged, his multiplied labors had begun to tell seriously on his health. He found that he could perform them no longer, and he resolved on making an immediate change.

While at St. Johns, several of the most wealthy parishes had been offered to him, where, with abundant salary and much lighter labor, he might have enjoyed all the pleasures of high ecclesiastical position. He, however, refused them all, and accepted a professorship at St. Andrews University, the living from which could not be reckoned higher than £300 ($1,440) a year.

He found St. Andrews, both city and University, at a low ebb of spiritual indifference. His desire of preaching the gospel to the poor could not be gratified by public ministrations. There were, however, all around him, children having immortal souls, and he had a house of his own. He soon collected a class into a Sabbath school. This was a fruit of which the seed was in itself. It spread over the whole city in the manner already indicat-

ed. In our efforts to do good, it will generally be found that the work which God places immediately before us, though it may seem small and of little promise, is really the effort which he will bless, and which he will carry out by his own power to the most magnificent results. It was signally thus with the Sabbath schools of Robert Raikes.

Dr. Chalmers was after a few years appointed Professor of Theology in the University of Edinburgh. Here he prosecuted his labor for the masses, by the attempt to multiply churches. When this effort was arrested by the disruption, he carried on the same design in behalf of the Free Church. When, after two or three years, this church did not realize his expectations in this respect, he turned at last to his crowning effort at the West Port. Here God gave him the desire of his heart, and he was not called away until he, in joyous gratitude, could say, "I can now lay down my head and rest in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

From this brief review of the career of Dr. Chalmers, we see that in obedience to the Saviour's command he consecrated himself to the work of carrying *the gospel to every creature*. Unparalleled multitudes crowded to hear, admire, and honor him. But he saw that thus he was not yielding obedience to the Master's command. Those who came were but few in comparison with

the multitudes who did not come. The poor, degraded, and vicious would never enter those magnificent temples, commonly called the houses of God. The gospel must *be carried to them;* and wherever he went, he at once commenced the performance of this duty. He marked out a district, he sought out fellow-laborers, he labored with them; he was certain that thus the gospel in love and affection would be carried to every family. And never did the gospel fail to produce its effect. This, which he denominated his territorial system, is, if I may so call it, one of the most important discoveries in philanthropy. It is worthy of the thoughtful consideration of all good men. Were any of our cities thus divided into districts, each under the care of a small number of the disciples of Christ, who would carry the gospel to every family, and practically exhibit the love of the Saviour to the fallen and miserable, in ten years moral and social changes would be witnessed that would cheer the heart of every benefactor of his race.

And it is to be remarked that the wisdom of Dr. Chalmers's plans was commensurate with his charity. He saw that notwithstanding the thousands of pounds which were given by the city to support the poor, together with the vast amount that was contributed by individual liberality, pauperism was every year more distressing, and that

it was rapidly on the increase. He arrived at this conclusion: that the mere giving of money by the public is rather a curse than a blessing, and that even in the case of private charity it is frequently of the same character; that the law of the New Testament is perfectly economical and merciful, —if a man will not work, neither shall he eat. God spreads before us the fertile earth, abundant for the supply of all the wants of man; but it is his will that we should obtain our part of this abundance only as the *result of labor*. Hence he established it as an axiom, that it is of no use to attempt to help the poor unless you engage them to aid in helping themselves. He would allow but little to be given in charity, and then in only extreme cases. Relief was granted only to those who were disabled, and then only for a season, if their relatives were able to help them. Pains were taken to find labor for all who were able to work. The principle of self-respect was constantly inculcated, and they were taught to be ashamed of being on the poor-roll. Even education was not afforded as a gratuity; all were obliged to pay for it, — not at its full price, for much was done in the work of preparation by charity; but none were deprived of the pleasure of feeling that they paid for it. It was by such labors as these that in a few years the parish of St. Johns, instead of demanding £1,200 ($5,760) for supporting it in misery and vice, was more than able to support itself.

From the labors of Dr. Chalmers at St. Andrews we also learn another important lesson. He was here placed in a situation where no opportunity was afforded for labor in the cause of Christ by public ministrations. The only door of usefulness open to him, which is equally open to all of us, was to teach a few poor children in his own house. Not despising the day of small things, he immediately seized upon this mode of usefulness, and in the result it was seen that this was the very path that led to the greatest and most blessed results. The work, commencing with a few small children, gradually spread, until schools and preaching stations thickly dotted the whole town and vicinity, and the University itself, once notorious as a place of riot and dissipation, was cleansed and purified, and became a garden of the Lord. Let us never, then, draw back from a good work because we can only labor on a small scale. Though the beginning be small, God only knows how greatly the latter end may increase. Let us adopt, as did Dr. Chalmers, the maxim of the missionary Eliot, "Prayers and pains, with the blessing of God, can do anything."

In the West Port the labors of Dr. Chalmers were of a more decidedly *evangelical character*. He had from the beginning the design and the hope that he might bring this district under the influence of the gospel, and thus, while being the

means of saving the souls of men, he might also raise them to the level of respectable citizens. The place which he selected was to human appearance the most unpromising. It was not only the most vicious and degraded portion of Edinburgh, but its crimes had rendered it notorious throughout the civilized world. No more vicious and degraded locality could be found in any of our cities. Yet into these very dens Dr. Chalmers and his associates, both men and women, strong in faith and love, boldly entered, providing education for the children, work for the idle, and carrying to every family the message of love from that Saviour who died to redeem them. The Holy Spirit wrought with them, and carried the message of salvation with power to the hearts of those wretched men. That old tannery loft became the spiritual birthplace of immortal souls, and at this moment it is infinitely more illustrious in the eyes of Almighty God than St. Peters at Rome, with all the splendors of its gorgeous flummery.

The result has been already alluded to. In less than four years two-thirds of the children of this degraded district were at school, and a church was formed of one hundred and thirty-two communicants. The work went on after the death of Dr. Chalmers, until before long there was not a child in a single family of the West Port, of suitable age, that did not attend school; and the moral charac-

ter and attendance on church, of the district, were on a par with those of the most favored localities of Edinburgh.

After this let no one consider human beings, how degraded soever, beyond the reach of the saving influence of the gospel. The weapons of our warfare are mighty through God to pulling down of *strongholds*. Let us then, in the assurance of faith and earnestness of love, go forth, confidently expecting that when in simplicity of heart we labor for him, Christ will give us the victory. Nor have such results been confined to the West Port and to the labors of Dr. Chalmers. The effects of carrying the gospel in love among the degraded inhabitants of St. Giles, London, are much the same. A multitude of children have been plucked from the very jaws of destruction, by the Howard Mission, from one of the worst localities in New York. We expect missionaries to go ten thousand miles to carry the gospel to people of a strange language; why should we not become missionaries to the perishing and miserable at our own doors?

Dr. Chalmers accomplished an amount of labor in a lifetime which seems almost incredible, and he worked hard until the day of his death. How did he do this? He took but two or three hours a day for hard work, and never suffered himself to become exhausted. He had thus leisure for all his other multiplied and interesting avocations.

Might we not derive an important lesson from his example? Many a minister never puts himself to labor until the last days, perhaps the very last day of the week. He writes throughout the whole of Saturday, perhaps through Saturday night, and even during a part of Sunday, of course for the greater part of the time with a tired and worn-out brain. He preaches in this condition on Sunday, and is listless and Mondayish for several days afterward. The effects of this course in a few years become visible. As it is said, *he breaks down*, must take a voyage and a tour, from which he returns to pursue the same course over again. Hence it seems to be taken for granted, as one of the providential arrangements of God, that a minister of the gospel must be a pallid, broken-down invalid, the object of universal pity and sympathy. The example of Dr. Chalmers seems to teach us a different lesson. Here was a man doing more work than any minister of his time, and, excepting in one or two instances, in vigorous health; and dying at the age of seventy, a robust and vigorous man, in a green and fruitful old age. Why should not we adopt as our maxim, "What other men have done, we, with the blessing of God, can do also"?

And, lastly, it may be supposed that the life of Dr. Chalmers was mostly objective, and that, while he labored so much for others, his own heart was suffered to go to waste. But it was not so. His

deep interest in his own personal salvation and in the salvation of his relatives is everywhere apparent in his journals and most familiar letters. In his various devotional writings, we are struck with his importunate, unceasing pleadings for holiness, and his minute inspection of every thought, desire, and motive of his heart. While he cherished with the most unfaltering confidence the truth, that God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life; while he believed that we are pardoned, not through our own works, but through the alone righteousness of Christ, by which also we are introduced to the favor of God, he was just as earnestly engaged in striving after holiness as if his entire salvation depended upon his own works. In the height of his popularity he was deeply despondent, on one occasion, because he saw no fruit from his labors; but he was at once encouraged by learning of one who had by his instrumentality been brought into the kingdom of Christ. He rejoiced more over one sinner that repented than in all the applause of his unprecedented popularity. Let us all be imitators of him, as he imitated Christ. Let us labor not for the applause of men, not to advance our congregations in social position, not to gather the rich and the literary into our audience-rooms, but to save immortal souls from perdition; to carry the

gospel, with all its saving influences, to every creature, until the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our God and his Christ.

"Servant of God, well done;
Rest from thy loved employ:
The battle fought, the victory won,
Enter thy Master's joy.

The voice at midnight came;
He started up to hear;
A mortal arrow pierced his frame;
He fell, but felt no fear.

At midnight came the cry,
'To meet thy God prepare!'
He woke and caught his Captain's eye,
Then, strong in faith and prayer,

His spirit with a bound
Left its encumbering clay:
His tent at sunrise on the ground
A darkened ruin lay.

The pains of death are passed;
Labor and sorrow cease;
And life's long warfare closed at last,
His soul is found at peace.

Soldier of Christ, well done!
Praise be thy new employ,
And, while eternal ages run,
Rest in thy Master's joy."

THE END.

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